BV 1520
.V5
1872
Copy 1

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

Chap. BV 1520 Copyright No. .....

Shelf .V5 1872

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

4329.C

THE

CHURCH SCHOOL

AND

ITS OFFICERS.

By J. H. VINCENT, D.D.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
COPYRIGHT
No.
WASHINGTON D.C.

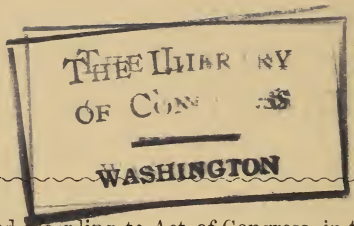
"These things command and teach."—St. Paul.

"Every good work of the Spirit is a ministry."—St. Chrysostom.

NEW YORK:
CARLTON & LANAHAN.
SAN FRANCISCO: E. THOMAS.
CINCINNATI: HITCHCOCK & WALDEN.
SUNDAY-SCHOOL DEPARTMENT.

1872

BV1520
.V5
1872



Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1872, by

CARLTON & LANAHAN,

in the Office of the Librarian of Congress at Washington.

0 4 S 8 - 3 E H

To my Venerable

FATHER,

WHO MADE THE HOME OF MY CHILDHOOD A PLACE OF PRAYER AND A SCHOOL OF PIETY;
WHO TAUGHT ME THE WAY TO GOD'S HOUSE IN MY INFANCY;
WHO BROUGHT ME UP TO REVERENCE GOD'S MINISTERS;
WHO WAS THE FIRST AND THE BEST SUNDAY-SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT I EVER HAD;

And to the Memory of my Precious and now Sainted

MOTHER,

WHOSE LIFE WAS FULL OF FAITH, AND SWEETNESS, AND STRENGTH;
WHO DID HER FULL DUTY TO HER CHILDREN;
WHOSE DEATH WAS A TRANSLATION;
AND WHOM I LOVE MORE FONDLY TO-DAY THAN WHEN I KISSED HER LIPS FOR THE LAST TIME, TWENTY YEARS AGO;

THIS LITTLE VOLUME

Is Dedicated.

THE modern Sunday school has outgrown the fondest hopes of its founders. Devised as a temporary expedient for the education of neglected children on the Sabbath, it developed a form of Christian activity which, in its essential features, was employed in the primitive Church, had also a place in the Jewish economy, and which is, in fact, a legitimate outgrowth of the plan of redemption.

The good philanthropists of the last century, in digging that they might build a human fabric, laid bare an ancient and divine foundation. Let us rear our superstructure upon this, rather than upon their narrow bases and after their scantier measurements.

This little work is written mainly for ministers, especially for the younger ministers of the Church. To them the author may speak more frankly and plainly than to his seniors.

He has also sought to define the duties of other Church school officers, upon whose service so much depends: the superintendent, chorister, secretary, etc.

The Church school is divine. Its officers should be divinely called and divinely endowed. The leader in this department of Church labor is the minister. Every minister should be, in one sense, a Sunday school man. There is nothing in the service to compromise the dignity or diminish the influence of a true servant of Christ. It will not prove detrimental to his reputation or efficiency. The Rev. Dr. Tyng, for example, is no less acceptable as a pastor, preacher, or theologian, because he is pre-eminently a Sunday school worker. Even if the juvenile side of the cause be emphasized a little unduly, it does not detract from its worth or nobleness. The apostles were not ashamed of the first sentence of their pastoral commission—FEED MY LAMBS. It was no stain on their parchments. Nor did the apostolic dignity suffer loss by the faithful performance of this duty. Jesus, if in the flesh to-day, would be a "Sunday school man." He would again, as in ages agone, invite to him the "little children," and take them up in his arms, and put his hands on them and bless them. How charming the picture of the pastor, drawn by Bishop Tegner, and so exquisitely trans-

lated by Longfellow. It occurs in "The Children of the Lord's Supper:"

> "Friendly the teacher stood, like an angel of light, there among them,
> And to the children explained he the holy, the highest, in few words,
> Thorough, yet simple and clear, *for sublimity always is simple.*
> Both in sermon and song a child can seize on its meaning."

But there is another side of the Sunday school equally worthy of our attention, which it is the especial aim of this volume to present—the adult department. Men and women are to be taught. Discipleship in the school of Christ is not suspended this side of Paradise. The minister is to be their chief teacher; the teacher of the subordinate teachers; himself well taught; skillful in teaching, and an example fit to follow.

We want more Sunday school men in the ministry—men who understand the ecclesiastical relations and practical workings of the system, who have faith in it, love it, and have consecrated themselves to it; who, neglecting no other part of their calling, seek to be "teachers of good things" to the old and to the young. "The whole man and the whole time are all too little in so great a work." Great is the reward of the true Gospel teacher. There is nothing comparable to it. Even to receive present testimony from

those whom we have helped to the knowledge of the truth, is a blessing. Hear the rescued Mary in "Bitter Sweet" sing the praises of her counselor and friend:

> "He sat before me for a golden hour,
> And gave me counsel and encouragement;
> Till, like broad gates, the possibilities
> Of a serener and higher life
> Were thrown wide open to my eager feet,
> And I resolved that I would enter in,
> And, with God's gracious help, go out no more."

Thank God that he has made us such gate-keepers to his kingdom in this life!

This little volume is far from perfect. The author feels its defects more keenly than the critic can see them. But it has its mission to fulfill, and so is sent out with faith and prayer. If any life is strengthened, if any ministry is quickened, if any Church is in the slightest degree aided by it,—to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, be glory for ever. Amen.

THE AUTHOR.

NEW YORK, *April*, 1872.

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	Christ and the Word	11
II.	The Divine Methods	23
III.	The Two Schools	36
IV.	The School Method Demanded	51
V.	The Earlier Ages	65
VI.	The Pastor	99
VII.	The Children and the Church	137
VIII.	The Superintendent	149
IX.	Other Officers	157
X.	The Older Scholars	169
XI.	Collateral Aids	181
XII.	The Great Needs	189
	Appendix	203

Let the WORD OF CHRIST dwell in you richly; in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another; in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.—ST. PAUL.

Blessed are the undefiled in the way,
Who walk in the law of the Lord.

I will meditate in thy precepts,
And have respect unto thy ways.

I will delight myself in thy statutes:
I will not forget thy word.

Thy statutes have been my songs
In the house of my pilgrimage.

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet,
And a light unto my path.

Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord;
And like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?

And when they shall say unto you,
Seek unto them that have familiar spirits,
And unto wizards that peep, and that mutter:
Should not a people seek unto their God?
For the living to the dead?
To the law and to the testimony:
If they speak not according to this word,
It is because there is no light in them.

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES.

The word ἐρευνᾶτε, which might be translated, "Ye search diligently," is very expressive. Homer, in the Iliad, (xviii, 321,) applies it to a *lion* deprived of her whelps, who "scours the plains and traces the footsteps of the man." . . . It is compounded of ερεω, *I seek*, and ενν̣η, a *bed;* and is, says Chrysostom, "a metaphor taken from those who dig deep and search for metals in the bowels of the earth. They look for the *bed* where the metal lies, and break every clod, and sift and examine the whole in order to discover the ore."—A. CLARKE.

THE

CHURCH SCHOOL AND ITS OFFICERS.

CHAPTER I.

CHRIST AND THE WORD.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.—Col. iii, 16.

THE Bible is the word of Christ. He is its central and all-absorbing theme. To him all the history and poetry and prophecy of the Old Testament point. The Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles are as full of his person and work as the Evangelists themselves.

The Bible contains the mind—the thought and love—that is in Jesus. Every fundamental principle of morals and religion which may legitimately be drawn from any portion of the

Bible as its manifestly intended interpretation, finds its center in Christ. There is no contradiction between his character as portrayed by the Evangelists and the fairly deducted doctrines drawn from any part of the sacred volume. This is a great thing to say about the Book. It is an argument of weight in its favor. Think of it! Sixty-six volumes, written by at least forty different persons; at different periods of time—the extremes measuring over two thousand years; written in different parts of the world; under different forms of civilization; under different governments; in different languages. Yet from these diverse sources come *sectilia* of a beautiful mosaic, which, when combined, form a unity the most perfect; a doctrinal scheme the most profound and philosophical; a picture glowing with poetic beauty, at the same time startling and enchanting the soul by prophetic visions; while in all and through all there shines forth the image of One who is above his fellows, glorious with divinity and

peerless as the ideal of a redeemed humanity. That Book *must* be divine.

It is the word of Christ moreover in this sense, that it is the medium of his present power. Of every author it may be said, "He, being dead, yet speaketh." So the blind Homer gives light and inspiration to-day. But Jesus more, and in a deeper sense than Homer. The Iliad and the Bible are alike and unlike. The thought of their respective authors is embalmed in both. But in the one we have a tomb, full of commemorative pictures, the fragrance of the funereal incense still lingering on the air, a place of beauty and inspiration and sacred memory; but, after all, in the central sarcophagus the author lies—*dead*. But the Bible is no tomb. Its author is not dead. Its delights are not those of memory and imagination, for the living Christ is *in* his word. Mystically, invisibly, but really, is he present there. The Book is his divine body. We need not ascend into heaven to bring Christ down from above. We need not descend into

the deep to bring up Christ again from the dead. Do we seek him? Would we see Jesus? Here is the Gospel reply to our search, "The word is nigh thee." Rom. x, 8. Lo! here in the Scriptures is this same Jesus whom shepherds and wise men worshiped, whom the multitudes thronged in the days of his flesh, whom soldiers crucified, and Joseph buried, and the eternal God raised up from the dead. He is here in his own word, a living presence, ready to give sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, healing to the leprous, deliverance to the demoniac, life to the dead, and pardon to the guilty—the erring Magdalenes, the troubled Marthas, the unstable but repentant Peters. Seek ye the Lord Christ? Find him in his word.

The whole gracious work of redemption is wrought through the mediumship of this word. Life is a probation and a pupilage, in which man must be born again and then trained for eternity. From the moment of his regeneration the processes of spiritual culture should go on.

This twofold work of quickening and culture is effected by the Holy Ghost. But the Holy Ghost operates through the *truth* as revealed in the Holy Scriptures. This is the sharp blade that penetrates the inmost things of the soul, and lays open to self-consciousness the fearful condition which requires a gracious interposition. "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." Do we seek converting influence? Look not to the "glory of God" in the heavens, nor his "handiwork" in the firmament. Seek it not of the sun, though "his going forth is from the end of heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof," but turn to the word of God in revelation and learn that "the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." Do you seek spiritual enlightenment? "The entrance of

thy words giveth light." Do you seek regenerating power? "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth." Man is "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever."

What blessings in the whole range of spiritual life and experience do you seek? Preservation from sin? "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee." Stability? "The law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide." Success in prayer? "If ye abide in me and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." Strength of character and victory over the enemy of souls? "I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one." Spiritual freedom? "If ye continue in my word then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Sanctification?

"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." Do you aspire to the attainment of that holy character in which you shall be "partakers of the divine nature?" Then go to the Gospel of Christ, in which "are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." Go through the Book, from the bold words of the first verse, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," to the blessed benediction of the last verse, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all," and learn by a precious experience that "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

Seeing that the word is so important an element in the work of grace, I do not wonder at the song of David concerning the man whose

"delight is in the law of the Lord," and who in this law doth "meditate day and night." Verily he "shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." I now understand why he sang: "O how I love thy law! it is my meditation all the day. Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for they are ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts. . . . The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver. . . . How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth. . . . My soul hath kept thy testimonies; and I love them exceedingly."

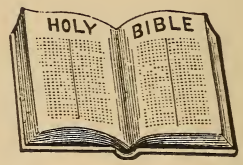
The tradition concerning Jonathan Ben-Uzziel, one of the pupils of Hillel, is in a spiritual sense fulfilled in the devout student of the word.

It is recorded of him that "when he studied the law every bird that flew over his head was burned up." So glorious and vivid and intense is the light that falls from heaven upon every sincere disciple of Jesus who sits before the open Book to learn of his Master. So also the ancient maxim of the Jew is realized in the better dispensation of the Gospel: "In whatsoever place the law is, there the Shekineh is present with it."

This is the mystery of the Book; a sealed Book to the multitude; a literary marvel indeed, a reliable history, a volume of poetry and ethics and sublime speculations to the candid, thoughtful, unilluminated student—but to him whose secret heart the Lord hath opened—lo! in the word is the Lord himself!

If this be the relation of Christ to his word there is need that the modern Church of Christ in its quest of the Master be told where he is to be found. O that some apostle would cry aloud unto the Churches of the age, as Paul to

the elders of the Ephesian Church when he met them at Miletus: "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."



And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart : and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.

Children, obey your parents in the Lord : for this is right. Honor thy father and mother, (which is the first commandment with promise,) that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.

And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath : but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved ; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

Then they that gladly received his word were baptized : and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so.

And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue : whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.

CHAPTER II.

THE DIVINE METHODS.

"In all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another."—COL. iii, 16.

THERE is a true method observed by the God of all grace in his gracious work among men. He saves, but not arbitrarily, nor in violation of established intellectual and moral laws. The truth is the medium of the Holy Spirit. Without the accompanying energy of the Spirit, the truth itself would be impotent. Let us never forget this. Jesus was nothing but a man, a Jew, a Nazarene, to multitudes in his day. "There went virtue out of him" to those who sought him in the right spirit. So must we seek not the word alone, but Christ in the word.

When, however, the saving truth is sought

and applied, no violence is done to either man's freedom or the laws of his mental action. Light, whether from the sun or the planets, is conveyed to the eye through the same medium, and under the operation of the same laws. The constitution of the soul is not changed by the supernatural interventions of redemption. After the visitation of grace the eye sees, the ear hears, memory goes backward, hope goes forward, and all the intellectual powers act just as before.

The Divine Deliverer and Educator of the race has respected man's constitution in determining the methods of his redemption. Were a street-waif to be taken from the Five Points in our city, and taught under the most competent instructors of the age, we affirm that not a just principle would be recognized, nor a correct method adopted in his training, not already anticipated and applied in the management of the waif Israel taken from the land of Goshen, and instructed in the school of God at Mount Sinai. The same principles appear again, in a

higher form, in the methods of the Great Teacher. They are also present in his Church whenever she is under his direction, for they inhere in the very constitution of the human mind and of the Christian society.

In the instruction of a human soul there are three important steps to be taken: 1, Truth must be apprehended by the intellect; 2, Accepted by the affections; 3, Appropriated—incorporated in the character. This threefold work is indispensable. One wanting, the culture is incomplete. In the Divine scheme all are recognized, and for each an appropriate form of Church instrumentalities is arranged.

We have referred to Israel in Egypt and the Wilderness. Let us trace the divine processes in the education of this people to illustrate the position assumed. Israel was, first of all, removed from the physical, intellectual, and moral bondage of Egypt, just as the child of the Five Points would be separated, for his reform and education, from his former associations. Israel

did not go into Canaan by the way of el-Arish and Philistia, but by the more circuitous route of the Sea, Sinai, and the Jordan. The bondmen of Egypt were not at once prepared for the Babe of Bethlehem. They dwelt in the sphere of the material, and were ignorant of spiritual truth. The manifestation of physical force was requisite in order to the recognition of their Deliverer. God must needs appear as a Power, breaking into fragments and trampling under foot their old opinions and dominions. The new wonder-worker must distance, with unmistakable miracle, all competition from the old magician. For the cup of blood in the sorcerer's hand a river of blood must roll to the sea. The new staff-serpent must swallow the conjurers' rods, and become a wand in the Prophet's grasp again. As the rap of the teacher's hand on the school desk reminds the pupil of a present authority, so "the thunderings and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking," caused the people

tremblingly to await, and then revere, the revelation. The fixed attention was rewarded. Truth was given. It came in every legal and ceremonial enactment, in every miraculous interposition, in every address of God's Prophet. In the communication of this new truth to Israel, how beautifully we find illustrated the now popular method of "object teaching." Spiritual truth entered the Hebrew soul through the gateways of the senses. The theology of the New Testament was embodied in the arrangements and ceremonies of the Tabernacle. The Jewish dispensation was a "school-master" to bring the Hebrew race and then humanity to Christ. They stretched out over the world the forms of their theological thought—cables laid through every sea, and in thread-like extensions reaching every land. When Christ came and the Spirit was poured out, these forms became suddenly instinct with evangelical life.

Thus we find that for the communication of

truth to a race, the all-wise God prescribed the very methods which wise teachers now employ in developing the intellect of a child.

Jesus did likewise. He laid hold of the visible, using similes, parables, and objects, as when he placed a child before the disciples to teach them humility, or called for a penny and made its superscription his text. In the department of religious truth the same method is still employed. What is the Christian family but the object-school of theological truth, in which the authority, attributes, and laws of God are illustrated, and the child taught, through the visible relations and real experiences of daily life, the invisible and eternal verities of the kingdom of God? The Christian family is the tabernacle for the communication of religious ideas to its children, separated as they there are from the demoralizing tendencies of worldly society, and under the influences of parental love and authority. Thus God provides for the first essential thing in the

application to man of his grace in redemption—the apprehension of truth by the intellect.

The truth grasped by the intellect must next be accepted by the will and affections, for truth is never a force in life until the heart is moved and molded by it. The pupil in the secular school must be excited, by personal interest in his work, to self-activity. Israel in the wilderness learned the same lesson. With every revelation of truth God made new requisitions upon their love and obedience. By the strongest mandates of authority, by the most terrible sanctions of penalty, by the fairest attractions of promise, God commended the new truth to the heart as well as to the eye and intellect of his people.

As contributing to this result, the people were assembled in great multitudes, from time to time, to hear the law of God and the appeals of his servants. The Scriptures, which the services of the tabernacle and the providential interpositions of God had made clear to their

understanding, were publicly read. On every such occasion the heart of the people was stirred. The blessings and the cursings rang out in the valley of Shechem, and the elders, officers, and judges, "the women and the little ones, and the strangers that were conversant among them," listened attentively. The outspoken response of "all the people" elicited at that time was a virtual consecration of themselves to God.

When Joshua addressed all the tribes before his death, after his fervent appeal to them to "fear the Lord and serve him in sincerity and in truth," he bids them make their choice between the God of Israel and the gods of the Chaldeans and the Amorites. Under the pressure of this public review of God's dealings with them, and this impassioned appeal of the venerable leader, the people cry out, "God forbid that we should forsake the Lord to serve other gods!"

How was the heart of the people moved by

the public services performed in Jerusalem, when the corner-stone of the new temple was laid in the time of Ezra. And when the people gathered themselves together as one man to hear Ezra read from the book of the law of Moses, it is recorded that "all the people wept when they heard the words of the law."

There was a profound reason in the command to "gather the people together, men, and women, and children, and thy stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the Lord your God; and observe to do all the words of this law." Deut. xxxi, 12. The public assembly is favorable to the development of strong emotion. The truth, which may be more distinctly outlined to the thought in private, may be more easily impressed upon the heart in public. To the tabernacle system for the conveyance of the religious idea, God added the public assembly for the awakening of the sensibilities, and the persuasion of the people to accept and obey the

truth. So to-day we have the family tabernacle, and then the pulpit. The first and distinctive work of the pulpit is to convict the conscience and convert the soul. "We persuade men," said Paul. "We pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."

Addressing those whose conscious needs respond to its announcements, the pulpit does not so much depend upon processes of argumentation. It brings available remedies for actual distresses, a message of reprieve to the condemned, vision to blindness, purity to sin. It informs the intellect, quickens the conscience, warms the emotions, and impels to decision; not so much starting the intellectual forces into activity, as bringing the will up to the well-established affirmations of the judgment.

The pulpit disseminates the truth rapidly. One utterance may reach ten thousand souls at the same moment. The invisible bond of sympathy that unites an audience, renders each

hearer more accessible and susceptible to the truth. The universal silence, the fixed attention, the tacit assent of all to the truth declared, tend to inspire the speaker. The whole argument is in his own hands. No voice can enter its protest. Then the dramatic elements of countenance, gesture, and intonation, increase the effect of every sentence. These are some of the natural advantages possessed by the pulpit. And when we recall the Divine promise to accompany the truth by the energy of his Spirit, we do not wonder at the power of this instrumentality.

To the Jew, lost in the mummeries of a dead ritualism—to the Greek, deluded by the charms of a merely speculative philosophy—we are not surprised that the public proclamation of salvation through a crucified *Jew* should be "foolishness;" but seeing now the bearings of the truth preached, and the effectiveness of the method, and having enjoyed the fulfillment of the promise, "Lo, I am with you," we acknowl-

edge the preaching of the Gospel to be "the power of God."

After the truth has found a place in the understanding through the early teachings and clear illustrations of the FAMILY, and in the affections through the appeals and persuasions of the PULPIT, the convert enters the inner courts of the Church as a *disciple*. He has now commenced a life of study, struggle, and service. He is a sort of soldier-student. It is his duty to build up the temple of God within him. And he must build as they did in Nehemiah's day, when "every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon." Here begins the SCHOOL of Christ. Having made "disciples," the Church must instruct them. An eminent commentator, in his notes upon Acts xiv, 22, says: "The word disciple signifies literally a scholar. The Church of Christ was a school, in which Christ himself was chief master, and his Apostles subordinate teachers. All the converts were disciples

or scholars who came to this school to be instructed in the knowledge of themselves and of their God; of their duty to him, to the Church, to society, and to themselves. After having been initiated in the principles of the heavenly doctrine, they needed line upon line, and precept upon precept, in order that they might be confirmed and established in the truth."*

* The wording of the Master's commission (Matthew xxviii, 19, 20) deserves our consideration: "Go ye therefore and teach (*μαθητεύσατε*, that is, disciple, or make disciples of) all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, TEACHING (*διδάσκοντες*, that is, *instructing*) them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." "This teaching is nothing less than the building up of the whole man in the obedience of Christ. In these words, inasmuch as the then living disciples could not teach all nations, does the Lord found the office of preachers in his Church—with all that belongs to it—the duties of the minister, the school-teacher, the Scripture-reader. This 'teaching' is not merely the *κηρυγμα* of the Gospel, not mere proclamation of the good news, but the whole catechetical office of the Church upon and in the baptized."—ALFORD.

When through baptism the believer had become a member of the community of the saints, then, as such, he participated

Thus, for the threefold work committed to her, we find the Church assuming a threefold form:

1. To present the truth illustratively and clearly to the understanding, we have the FAMILY.

2. To secure a personal allegiance, we have the PULPIT.

3. To mold and perfect character, after the standard and by the operation of the truth, we have the SCHOOL.

in the progressive courses of instruction which prevailed in the Church."—OLSHAUSEN.

The *teaching* is a continuous process—a thorough indoctrination in the Christian truth, and the building up of the whole man into the full manhood of Christ, the author and finisher of our faith.—DR. SCHAFF.

Instead, therefore, of regarding the present position of the Sunday school as a false and anomalous one, we see in it the agency of a divine hand. We recognize it as an instrument of the Church, acting in the twofold capacity of a conservative and aggressive power; or, in the first, as auxiliary to the pastoral function; in the second, as auxiliary to the missionary function. We consider it in these aspects, not as a mere accident in the Church's history; not as a merely temporary expedient, to be used for the accomplishment of certain ends, and then to be laid aside; but as an essential part of the existing life and activity of the Church. The Sunday school system is not a mere tool in the hands of the Church; but a limb, that can never, hereafter, be lopped off without maiming her.—JOHN M'CLINTOCK, D.D., LL.D.

The second great function of the Church, as defined by our Lord in his commission, is to organize those who have been converted and become believers in him into congregations or Churches; that is, by making disciples, pupils, learners, or students of them; or, in other words, by the solemn badge of baptism associating together as many as can conveniently meet in one place and unite in common services, as scholars in Christ's school. Baptism is the appointed form of initiation into this school, and is analogous to the ticket of matriculation in our schools of learning. Into this school every convert, young and old, are to be introduced as scholars, so that, to be a member of a Church, in the language of Christ's commission, is to be a pupil or scholar in one of Christ's Churches. Every Church is, therefore, according to Christ's commission, a school. And as both the preaching and teaching services of the Church are to be conducted on the Lord's day, (which is commonly called Sunday or Sabbath,) a Sunday or Sabbath school is required by Christ's commission as essential to a Christian Church.—THOMAS SMYTH, D.D.

CHAPTER III.

THE TWO SCHOOLS.

"Thy stranger that is within thy gates."—EXOD. xx, 10.
"Building up yourselves on your most holy faith."—JUDE 20.

THE theory underlying a moral instrumentality has more to do with its efficiency than might at first be supposed. The prestige of ecclesiastical recognition, and much more of Divine authority, gives great advantage to any method of Christian effort. The fact that it has a philosophical fitness at once ennobles it in the esteem of men who judge of a method by its antecedent principles, and accept what is logically true, even without reference to its efficiency in practice.

If we can show that the Church school has its place in the system of divine methods, a virtual divine authority, a rational basis, and the

indorsement of early example, we may enlist valuable talent in its support, and, on the other hand, guard with greater certainty against the lamentable neglect of other means of grace which a one-sided view of the Sunday school has occasioned.

If the institution is regarded as a substitute for the Christian family, we need not be surprised if parents accept its service, and neglect responsibilities at home from which nothing can justly relieve them. If we make it a substitute for the pulpit, we may expect its members to neglect the ministry of the word, and thus foster the unpleasant antagonisms between "Church and Sunday school," between "Pastor and Superintendent," over which so many faithful hearts have already mourned. If it is for children only, since children in these days so soon pass into maturity, becoming adults ten years earlier than was the wont a century ago, we need not be surprised if our youth, as soon as parental restraint is relaxed, drop out of the

school, and, not having been trained to attend "public service," find it convenient to neglect that also. If only for children, since it is commonly supposed that labor in their behalf requires "peculiar gifts," and these not always in highest repute among the "theologians," we need not be surprised that large numbers of ministers look down with a lofty condescension upon the institution, patronizingly commend it, and then neglect it.

But before the Church school claims our notice we must look to another form of evangelical labor, now and for the past century known as the "Sunday school."

The pious Jew, in obedience to God's command, taught the traditions and explained the symbols and ceremonies of the Jewish faith to the "strangers" as well as to the sons of his household. The truth of God was committed to Israel almost exclusively for a time, that Israel might afterward proclaim it to all nations. This temporary limitation was in order to the

wider extension of God's kingdom. For centuries the darkness of the Gentile world felt no ray from the fire God was kindling upon Jewish altars. These were centuries of preparation. At last the flames blazed up, and the darkest darkness of Gentile heathendom was lighted by the divine truth. The Gospel was in the tabernacle and the temple long before Parthians and Medes, Elamites, Grecians, and Romans heard of it. But, true to its divine missionary impulse, even while under limitations it sought out and blessed the Gentiles within its reach. It could not yet go back to Egypt, but it could care for the Egyptians who followed with Israel the pillar of cloud and of fire. The "mixed multitudes," "the strangers" of the camp, were made partakers of the blessed privileges vouchsafed to Israel. To this home missionary element in the Jewish system we call attention.

The "strangers" there were in a minority. The Jewish homes absorbed and trained them. Times have changed. The old limitations have

been removed. The *world* is now our parish. The perishing millions are within our reach; but the Christian home may no longer absorb and educate the unchristian element of society. We could not by any possibility bring a thousandth part of the accessible "strangers" to our family altars. They are at, but not within, our gates. They will not come to the sanctuary. Our pastors cannot reach them.

Shall these "strangers," provided for under the Jewish, be neglected under the Christian, dispensation? But what shall we do? Behold in the modern mission school a divine provision for the new necessity. Coming forth from the firesides where it has, like the ark of God, abode for centuries, it proposes to do for the "strangers" to-day, under new circumstances, and by different methods, what it formerly did within the Hebrew home. The God who established it there has led it forth for a larger work. It is a Christian home outside of home. It teaches children who never received religious counsel

from father or mother the value of the word of God and of prayer to God. It gives them teachers who watch over their souls with mother-like tenderness. It secures for them what is equivalent to pastoral oversight. It brings them to the Church and the Cross. It puts sacred songs upon lips that have been accustomed to curses. It raises up from the heathen masses around us material out of which are made consistent Christians, good citizens, philanthropists, teachers, presidents and professors of colleges, preachers and missionaries. The mission Sunday school is thus a substitute for the family, the pulpit, and the pastorate. It does for the "stranger" what the parent should do for the family.

How blessed the mission, and how abundant the successes of this comparatively modern expedient for saving and instructing "the stranger within our gates!" It is John the Baptist pointing the untaught multitudes to the "Lamb of God." It is the true god-mother of the

Church, folding to her bosom the orphaned ones, and giving them up in holy consecration to God.

But our Church school is quite another institution. It is composed largely of the children of Church members. It is not intended to be a substitute for the family, the pulpit, the pastorate, or the secular school. Nor is it designed to be exclusively a children's institution.

What, then, is the Church school? It is that department of the Church of Christ in which the children, youth, and adults, of the Church and community are thoroughly trained in Christian knowledge, Christian experience, and Christian work. It co-operates with the family and the pulpit. It depends upon the ministry of the Holy Ghost. It takes for its text-book the Holy Scriptures. It is the *training* department of the Church. It is not merely for conversion. If that work has been neglected in any case, then conversion is the first thing to be sought. But the main thing in the Church school is the

development, training, and growth of the disciples, old and young. It is not merely a biblical school for intellectual furnishing in divine truth. It is for *spiritual edification.* It is not merely for children, but for Christians of all ages. As preaching and the accompanying services of the sanctuary are for children as well as adults, the school is for adults as well as children. Here the instructions of the family, the secular school, and the pulpit are supplemented by class recitation, discussion, and conversation. Here take place the activity, the attrition of brain and heart, by which truth is made clearer to the understanding, and gains a firm hold upon the affections. And this is indispensable to the highest form of Christian life.

The pulpit persuades. It also fosters the divine life by the frequent reiteration of the prominent doctrines of Scripture by its expositions, arguments, and illustrations. But the Church has something to do beyond the persuasion and lecture-teaching of the pul-

pit. This additional work has been admirably stated by the Rev. Augustus William Hare, of England, one of the authors of "Guesses at Truth." In a sermon on "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord," he says, "Our forefathers carried on the education of the poor by frequent and diligent catechising; that is, by questioning them over and over about the great truths and facts and doctrines of Christianity. But now that preaching is looked upon as the great thing in every Church, this catechising or questioning has in many places fallen into disuse. To profit by a sermon a man must attend to it; he must hear it thoroughly; he must understand it; he must think it over with himself when he gets home. How few in any congregation will go to all this trouble! You come, and sit, and hear, and I hope are able in some degree to follow the meaning of what I say to you from the pulpit; yet how far is this from the understanding and the knowl-

edge by which grace and peace are to be multiplied! But when a person is catechised, when he is asked questions, and called on to answer them, he must think; he must brace up his mind; unless he is determined not to learn, he can scarce help being taught something. And those who want to learn, those who feel a wish to improve, and to grow in a knowledge of their Lord and Master, what progress must they make under such instruction! When I speak thus of catechising, do not think I mean to decry preaching. Both are useful in their turns. Unless the mind be prepared by catechising, preaching loses half its use."

For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

Hebrews v, 12, affordeth us many observations suitable to our present busines. As, 1. That God's oracles must be man's lessons; 2. Ministers must teach these, and people must learn them; 3. The oracles of God have some principles or fundamentals that all must know that will be saved; 4. These principles must be first learned; 5. It may be well expected that people thrive in knowledge according to the means of teaching which they possess—and if they do not, it is their sin; 6. If any have lived long in the Church under the means of knowledge and yet be ignorant of these first principles, they have need to be taught them yet, how old soever they may be.—BAXTER.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SCHOOL METHOD DEMANDED.

Sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions.—LUKE ii, 46.

THE Church school is a necessity of Christian life. Growth in grace is connected with, and is in some measure dependent upon, growth in knowledge. Growth in knowledge is attained by the observance of intellectual laws. These laws are not abrogated by the Gospel, but remain in force so long as man is a thinking being.

In the acquisition of knowledge and in the development of mental power there must be more than simple reception and acceptation of statements by another. Telling a thing to a pupil comes far short of teaching. Simple hearing of the thing told, so as to know it, comes far short

of true study. There must be effort on the part of the pupil. He must think. The teacher must provoke his thought, must set him at work in a way that will cause him to think after the teacher has withdrawn from his presence.

This necessity of thinking and of growth imposes upon the teacher and the pupil the necessity of question and answer—the *echoing* back from one to another—the purposed "putting" of a subject to a student that compels him to add a thought or make and report a discovery of his own concerning that subject.

We may call the method of teaching what we please—"discussion," "disputation," "conversation," "question and answer," "interlocutory discourse," or "catechization"—but the thing itself we must have in order to the attainment of Christian knowledge. It is a method which obtains universally in the secular department of education. There can be no thorough teaching without it.

Preaching is in many places the only method of religious training—the only form of the Church school which is employed. The lamentable consequences are apparent in the superficiality of the people in Bible knowledge. We may report of too many Christians of our day what the pious Baxter wrote concerning those who attended upon his ministry, and yet neglected the catechetical methods which he so strenuously advocated. He says: "I am daily forced to admit how lamentably ignorant many of our people are that have seemed diligent hearers of me these ten or twelve years, while I spoke as plainly as I was able to speak. Some know not that each person in the Trinity is God; nor that Christ is God and man; nor that he took his human nature into heaven; nor many the like necessary principles of our faith. Yea, some that come constantly to private meetings are found grossly ignorant; whereas in one hour's familiar instruction of them in private they seem to

understand more, and better entertain it, than in all their lives before."

No one in the history of the Christian Church has pleaded with abler argument or intenser zeal than Richard Baxter for the revival of the original, apostolic and Christly system of catechisation, in order to thorough religious training. Two hundred years ago he uttered appeals in this behalf which may well be repeated in the ears of the saints to-day. We make an extract from the preface to his "Reformed Pastor," written in 1656, in which he addresses the ministers of his county, who, having been "awakened to a sense of their duty in the work of catechising and private instruction of all in their parishes," had convened at Worcester to "humble themselves before the Lord for their long neglect of so great and necessary a duty," and to engage "in earnest prayer to God for the pardon of their neglect, and for his special assistance in the work that they had undertaken, and for the success of it with the people

whom they were engaged to instruct." He says: "I bless the Lord that I have lived to see such a day as this, and to be present at so solemn an engagement of so many servants of Christ to such a work. I bless the Lord that hath honored you of this county to be the beginners and awakeners of the nation hereunto. It is not a controverted business, where the exasperated minds of divided men might pick quarrels with us, or malice itself be able to invent a national reproach; nor is it a new invention, where envy might charge you as innovators, or proud boasters, of any new discoveries of your own; or scorn to follow in it because you have led the way. No; it is a well-known duty. It is but the more diligent and effectual management of the ministerial work, and the teaching of our principles, and the feeding of babes with milk. You lead indeed, but not in invention of novelty, but the restoration of the ancient ministerial work, and the self-denying attempt of a duty that few or

none can contradict. I know that the public preaching of the Gospel is the most excellent means, because we speak to many at once; but, otherwise, it is usually far more effectual to preach it privately to a particular sinner; for the plainest man that is can scarcely speak plain enough in public for them to understand; but in private we may much more. In public we may not use such homely expressions, or repetitions, as their dullness doth require, but in private we may. In public our speeches are long, and we quite overrun their understandings and memories, and they are confounded and at a loss, and not able to follow us, and one thing drives out another, so that they know not what we said; but in private we can take our work *gradatim*, and take our hearers with us as we go; and by questions and their answers can see how far they go with us, and what we have next to do. In public, by length and speaking alone, we lose their attention; but when they are interlocutors, we can easily cause them to

attend. Besides that, we can, as we above said, better answer the objections, and engage them by promises before we leave them, which in public we cannot do. I conclude, therefore, that public preaching will not be sufficient ; for though it may be an effectual means to convert many, yet not so many as experience and God's appointment of further means may assure us. You may long study and preach to little purpose if you neglect this duty."

The question is not between preaching and catechisation, as to which is the divine ordinance. We accept and plead for both as necessary methods of winning, and then of training, souls for Christ. As good Thomas Fuller, in 1661, said of the "Faithful Minister," "*He doth not clash God's ordinances together about precedence*—not making odious comparisons betwixt prayer and preaching, preaching and catechising, public prayer and private, premeditate and *extempore*. When, at the taking of New Carthage, in Spain, two soldiers contended

about the mural crown, due to him who first climbed the walls, so that the whole army was thereupon in danger of division, Scipio, the general, said he knew that they both got up the wall together, and so gave the scaling crown to them both. Thus our minister compounds all controversies betwixt God's ordinances by praising them all, practicing them all, and thanking God for them all."

Referring to catechising, George Herbert in the "Country Parson" says: "This practice exceeds even sermons in teaching; but there are two things in sermons, the one informing, the other inflaming; as sermons come short of questions in the one, so they far exceed them in the other." "Although we know," says Trapp, "that which we ask of others as well as they do, yet good speeches will draw us to know it better by giving occasion to speak more of it, wherewith the Spirit works more effectually and imprints it deeper, so that it shall be a more rooted knowledge than before."

Says Matthew Henry: "We sharpen ourselves by quickening others, and improve our knowledge by communicating it for their edification."

"The catechetical mode," says Bridges in his "Christian Ministry," "is decidedly the most effective to maintain attention, elicit intelligence, convey information, and, most of all, to apply the instructions to the heart."

The biographer of Archbishop Usher says: "He found catechising an excellent way to build up souls in the most holy faith; and that none were more sound and serious Christians than those who were well instructed in these fundamental principles. This was the way Reformation was advanced in Europe, and Christianity in the primitive days; and this will be found the principal way to keep them alive, to maintain their vigor and flourish. The first Reformers from the Popish defection labored abundantly in this, and saw and rejoiced in the great success thereof. It is affirmed by Egesippus in his Ecclesiastical History, "That by virtue of

catechising there were few nations in the world (I think he says none) but what had received an alteration in their heathenish religion within forty years after the Passion of Christ. And I have read it as an usual complaint of some Jesuits, that they found there was but little hope of bringing back to the Romish Church, or of unsettling or discomposing, such Reformed Churches as were constant and serious in the use of catechising."

The necessity of the school method thus acknowledged, we are not surprised to find Baxter, Usher, and other divines of a former evangelical and fervent age, recommending measures of training, in substance the very same as those that we now enjoy. The form of the service is the outgrowth of the thought and life and genius of the Gospel. Sabbath, or properly Church, schools are necessities of a vigorous religious condition. Hear Baxter counsel the pastors of his time concerning the advices to be given heads of families:

"Direct them how to spend the Lord's day; how to dispatch their worldly businesses, so as to prevent incumbrances and distractions; and when they have been at the assembly, how to spend their time in their families. The life of religion lieth much on this, because poor people have no other free considerable time; and therefore if they lose this they lose all, and will remain ignorant and brutish. *Especially persuade them to these two things: If they cannot repeat the sermon, or otherwise spend the time profitably at home, that they take their family with them, and go to some godly neighbor that spends it better, that, by joining with them, they may have the better help.* That the master of the family will every Lord's day, at night, cause all his family to repeat the Catechism to him, and give him some account of what they have learned in public that day."

This, then, is the very necessity of Christianity. The Churches of this age in which the school and its distinctive methods prevail are the most

vigorous and successful. We have found the evangelical forces of the English Reformation struggling after the same method. We shall find that they obtained in the early ages of the Church, in the days of the apostles, and in the days of Christ.

There were four sorts of teachers and teaching of the law among the Jews: 1. In every city and town there was a school where children were taught to read the law; and if there were any town where there was not such a school, the men of the place stood excommunicate till such a one was erected. 2. There were the public preachers and teachers of the law in their synagogues, most commonly the fixed and settled ministers and *angeli ecclesiæ*, and sometimes learned men that came in occasionally. 3. There were those that had their *midrashoth*, or kept "divinity schools," in which they expounded the law to their scholars or disciples, of which there is exceeding frequent mention among the Jewish writers, especially of the schools of Hillel and Shammai. Such a divinity professor was Gamaliel. 4. And, lastly, the whole Sanhedrin in its session was as the great school of the nation, as well as the great judicatory; for it set the sense of the law, especially in matters practical, and expounded Moses with such authority that their gloss and determination was an *ipse dixit*—a positive exposition and rule, that might not be questioned or gainsaid.—LIGHTFOOT.

And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people; for he was above all the people; and when he opened it, all the people stood up: and Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God. And all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with lifting up their hands: and they bowed their heads, and worshiped the Lord with their faces to the ground. Also Jeshua, and Bani, and Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodijah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites, caused the people to understand the law: and the people stood in their place. So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.

CHAPTER V.

THE EARLIER AGES.

Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue, knowledge.—2 PETER i, 5.

IF the principles we have announced be correct, we may expect to find in the primitive Church something corresponding to the institution we have described. That it should be in exact resemblance to the school of our times is not necessary to establish their identity. In many respects the other religious services of the first and nineteenth centuries widely differ.

No divinely authorized mode of government or worship is laid down in the New Testament. The early Christians probably followed the forms of the Jewish synagogue, to which they had always been accustomed, with such modi-

fications as the example of Jesus and the conditions and social characteristics of their community demanded. Love for the Master, familiarity with his simple ways, fellowship in his sorrow, and an eager looking for his second coming, must have given to the religious worship of these Christians a beautiful simplicity and spontaneity. Their remembrance of "the words of the Lord Jesus," daily recalled by the oral testimony of those who were eye-witnesses of his life and inspired reporters of his teachings; the new significance of the Old Testament Scriptures; their faith in the word as an instrument of salvation—all these combined to give a deep interest to the constant study and practical application of the truth. It is simply impossible to suppose that in those days of vivid experience and intense activity the services of Christians were limited to the formal modes of our modern Churches. We learn that "they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine," the "word of Christ dwelt in them

richly," and in all wisdom they taught and admonished one another. Several facts aid us in answering the question, How did the primitive Christians thus teach and edify each other?

They were undoubtedly guided by their *Master's example*, for they remained in the world to fulfill his commission: "Make disciples, baptize, instruct." Jesus was pre-eminently "the Great Teacher." He taught wisely, lovingly, authoritatively, illustratively, patiently, effectively. He abounded in questions. He quickened his listless auditors into a questioning mood themselves, and then by divine art threw back their own questions upon themselves to find unexpected, irresistible answers in themselves. He used nature. Painter nor poet ever used it so felicitously and worthily. He used the Old Testament Scriptures in his prayers and conversations and sermons, holding up in new lights the old gems until they glittered like freshly cut diamonds. His life and ministry represented

the Church itself in the world—publishing salvation, proclaiming new truths, persuading men to accept them, and wisely training the men thus won in experience and service. His methods were rather those of the modern school than of the modern pulpit. By questions, conversations, and illustrations, he excited the minds of his disciples to self-activity. His longest addresses were frequently in reply to some inquiry which his own teachings had awakened. His "What is written in the law?" "How readest thou?" "Understandest thou this?" "What reason ye in your hearts?" "Have ye not read what David did?" "Is it lawful on the Sabbath days to do good?" all these are after the manner of the *teacher*, who awakens and *draws out* the mind of the pupil. And even after his public addresses or sermons, in which he spake the word to the people "as they were able to hear it," "when they were alone, he *expounded* all things to his disciples." Familiar with his words and modes, the early

disciples went forth to "preach and to teach in his name." *

The early Church undoubtedly followed very closely the *methods of the synagogue*.† There the word of God was not only read, but *expounded*, and this in addition to the regular discourse or sermon. Vitringa, in referring to

* Doth the number we speak to make it preaching, or doth interlocution make it none? Surely a man may as truly preach to one as to a thousand; and, as is aforesaid, if you search, you will find that most of the Gospel preaching in those days was by conference, or serious speeches to people occasionally, and frequently interlocutory; and that with one, two, or more, as opportunity served. Thus Christ himself did most commonly preach.—BAXTER.

† Very few particulars are given of the regulations established, of the appointment of the several orders of ministers, of the Divine service celebrated, or, in short, of any of the details of matters pertaining to a Christian Church. One reason for this, probably, was that a Jewish synagogue, or a collection of synagogues in the same neighborhood, *became* at once a *Christian Church* as soon as the worshipers, or a considerable portion of them, had embraced the Gospel, and had separated themselves from unbelievers. They had only to make such additions to their public service, and such alterations, as were required by their reception of the Gospel, leaving every thing else as it was.—ARCHBISHOP WHATELY.

this point, says: "There was first read a portion of the law, which was explained by a running commentary; so that the discourses in the ancient synagogues were not at all similar to the sermons of the present day, but were rather exegeses and paraphrases of what was either remarkable or obscure in the portion read. But besides the running commentary or paraphrase, there was frequently a discourse (analogous to our sermon) after the usual service of the synagogue." But this was not all, for either in the synagogue proper, or in an adjoining room, after the regular service, discussions and more thorough investigations of the truth were carried on. To these "disputations" reference is frequently made in the New Testament. "Then there arose certain of the synagogue, which is called the synagogue of the Libertines, and Cyrenians, and Alexandrians, and of them of Cilicia and of Asia, disputing with Stephen. And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he

spake." "But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ." "And he spake boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the Grecians: but they went about to slay him." At Ephesus he "went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God."* All Jews were admitted to these conversations, and all allowed to ask questions. The reading and preaching of the synagogue were followed by teaching and searching the Word. Kitto says:

"In the Jerusalem Talmud, a tradition is alleged that there had been at Jerusalem four hundred and sixty synagogues, each of which contained an apartment for the reading of the law, and *another for the meeting of men for*

* "Disputing and persuading"—*διαλεγόμενος καὶ πείθων.* "Holding conversations with them in order to persuade them of the truth of the doctrine of Christ."—CLARKE.

inquiry, deep research, and instruction. Such a meeting-hall is called by the Talmudists בת מדרש, that is, an apartment where lectures were given or conversations held on various subjects of inquiry. There were three of these meeting-places in the temple, and in all of them it was the custom for the students to sit on the floor, while the teachers occupied raised seats; hence Paul describes himself as having, when a student, 'sat at the feet of Gamaliel.' Acts xxii, 3. There are many hints in the Talmud which throw light upon the manner of proceeding in these assemblies. Thus a student asked Gamaliel whether the evening prayer was obligatory by the law or not. He answered in the affirmative, on which the student informed him that R. Joshua had told him that it was not obligatory. 'Well,' said Gamaliel, 'when he appears to-morrow in the assembly, step forward and ask him the question again.' He did so, and the expected answer raised a discussion, a full account of which is given.

The meeting-places of the wise stood mostly in connection with the synagogues; and the wise or learned men usually met soon after divine worship and reading were over in the upper apartment of the synagogues, in order to discuss those matters which required more research and inquiry. The pupils or students in those assemblies were not mere boys coming to be instructed in the rudiments of knowledge, but men or youths of more or less advanced education, who came thither either to profit by listening to the learned discussions, or to participate in them themselves. These meetings were *public*, admitting any one though not a member, and even allowing him to propose questions. These assemblies and meetings were still in existence in the time of Christ and his apostles."

In the light of all the facts we understand the allusions of the apostle to the customs of the early Christians. They met to sing and pray and hear the truth. But they also con-

versed as in the days of Malachi when "they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name." Thus did the early saints *edify* each other.

This also explains the counsels of the apostle in 1 Cor. xiv, 26–33, where he guards this liberty of the Church against abuse. The prophecy of Joel had been fulfilled, (ii, 28, 29,) and even upon "servants" and "handmaids" the Spirit had been poured out. Paul warned against extravagance, and condemned the noisy, unedifying, unsatisfactory rhapsodizing of some Corinthian Christians. There were in the first century (as there are in the nineteenth) disciples who had "a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge."

The high estimate placed upon *the study of the Word* by Christ, the apostles, and the Christian Fathers, must have produced its effect

upon the early Church. In the days of Moses the instruction of youth by their parents in the law of God had been commanded. This practice is beautifully illustrated in the case of Timothy, to whom Paul refers in his second Epistle, (i, 5 ; iii, 15.) In the *Mishna* it is written, "At five years of age let children begin the Scripture ; at ten the Mishna, and at thirteen let them be subjects of the law." Schools were organized for the purpose of training Jewish youth. Even the day-schools of Judaism were Bible-schools. Dr. Wordsworth, referring to Jesus in the temple at twelve years of age, says : "Our blessed Lord submitted to be *catechised*, according to the order and usage of the Jewish Church. Our Lord . . . was a Hebrew *catechumen*. The child Jesus submitting to be catechized by the authorized teachers of God's law in God's house is thus an example to all Christian children, and teaches them to come and be catechised by the ministers of his Church in the house of God. He also thus

teaches Christian parents to send their children to be catechised by the appointed teachers of the Christian law. And he declares the great importance of catechising in the Christian Church. And the Holy Spirit of God, by selecting this incident of Christ's childhood for perpetual commemoration in the Gospel, shows the great importance of the practical and doctrinal inference to be derived from it."

Thus Dr. Howson refers to the childhood of St. Paul: "His religious knowledge, as his years advanced, was obtained from hearing the law read in the synagogue, from listening to the arguments and discussions of learned doctors, and from that habit of questioning and answering which was permitted even to the children among the Jews." *

* "As to the questioning, great liberty was allowed to auditors and students in this respect—the system of instruction being, to a certain extent, interrogative, and students being encouraged to propose their doubts and difficulties, and to put any questions which the thirst of knowledge suggested, to those supposed to be able, from their position and attainments, to afford an authoritative solution."—*Kitto.*

This precedent was not forgotten by the early disciples. Dr. Mosheim, in his "Ecclesiastical History," (first century,) says that "Christians took all possible care to accustom their children to the study of the Scriptures, and to instruct them in the doctrines of their holy religion; and schools were every-where erected for this purpose, even from the commencement of the Christian Church."

"Ansgarius, the chief apostle of the northern nations, not only preached the Gospel to these barbarians, but established schools for the instruction of youth in religion and letters."—*Horne.*

"St. John founded the catechetical school of Ephesus, St. Mark that of Alexandria, and Polycarp that of Smyrna. Here the seeds of the Gospel were first sown in the young and ductile mind, before the propensities of more mature age had obstructed their growth. The difficulties which might have accompanied instruction merely private were lessened, both to the

teachers and their disciples ; and the experience of succeeding ages has only served to confirm the consummate wisdom and utility of these apostolical establishments, by displaying more fully the advantages of early piety and religious education."—*Kett's Bampton Lectures.*

"We must not confound the *schools* designed only for children with the *gymnasia*, or academies of the ancient Christians, erected in several large cities, in which persons of riper years, especially such as aspired to be public teachers, were instructed in the different branches, both of human learning and of sacred erudition. We may, undoubtedly, attribute to the apostles themselves, and their injunctions to their disciples, the excellent establishments in which the youth destined to the holy ministry received an education suitable to the solemn office they were about to undertake." (2 Tim. ii, 2.)—*Mosheim.*

When Aquila and Priscilla opened a school in their own house for Apollos, to teach him how to preach 'the way of God more per-

fectly,' what did they really do for that young minister but that which Sunday school teachers are doing every week in the year, and must do if we are to maintain apostolic preaching among us? They brought their knowledge of the Scriptures, their experience of the Gospel, to aid this promising minister of Christ in the important work which he had undertaken."—*Dr. Tyng.*

This high appreciation of the word, its use in the family, the school, the synagogue, and the "assembly of the wise," accounts for the perfect familiarity with it which the apostles evince in their recorded discourses. One is struck with this in Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost, in Stephen's final address, and in Paul's speech at Antioch.

In view of all these facts we cannot suppose that the early Christians were satisfied with merely listening to discourses on the truths of Christianity. The new meanings of the Old Testament which the life and teachings of Christ opened to their understanding, their remem-

brance of the Lord's precious words, the abundant outpouring of the Spirit, their familiarity with the exegetical and conversational methods of the schools and "assemblies," warrant us in concluding that they, as "disciples," met not only to pray, and to commemorate in the "supper" the passion of our Lord, but by prophesyings and teachings to insure "steadfastness in the apostles' doctrine."

This is further apparent from the emphasis placed upon the Holy Scriptures by Luke and the apostles. The Bereans were especially commended as "noble," inasmuch as "they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so." Paul advises the Christian warrior to be girt about the loins with truth, and to take the "sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."

To the elders of the Ephesian Church whom he met at Miletus the apostle says, "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up,

and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified." Had not Paul heard of the Master's prayer: "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth?" To Timothy he writes: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

The direction given to the Church at Colosse is very explicit. No modern Church school can desire a more perfect charter. On this passage the Rev. Dr. Adam Clarke says: "I believe the apostle means that the Colossians should be well instructed in the doctrine of Christ; that it should be their constant study; that it should be frequently preached, explained, and enforced among them; and that all the wisdom comprised in it should be well understood. . . . Through bad pointing this verse is not very intelligible; the several members of it should be distinguished thus: 'Let the doctrine of Christ

dwell richly among you; teaching and admonishing each other in all wisdom; singing with grace in your hearts unto the Lord, in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs.' This arrangement the original will not only bear, but it absolutely requires it, and is not sense without it." What a description of a thinking, growing, spiritual Church! Did they only hear preaching once or twice a week? In the social meetings was there no *study* and *teaching* of the "doctrine," "wisdom," WORD of God?

We have already referred to the Christians of the age immediately succeeding that of the apostles, and the catechetical schools which became so great a power in the third century. The literary "remains" of that remote age are few, and yet we find the traces of an intense devotion to the word of God. The people were Bible students. They were true successors of the Bereans visited by Paul. So far from justifying the course of Rome with reference to the word of God, the early bishops and fathers of

the Church insisted upon the careful and independent study of it.

Basil, Bishop of Cæsarea, in Cappadocia, contemporary with Epiphanius, says "that believers instructed in the Scriptures ought to examine what is said by their teachers, and to embrace what is agreeable to the Scriptures, and to reject what is otherwise."

"I trust," said Polycarp to the Church, "that ye are well exercised in the Holy Scriptures."

Said Origen: "That our religion teaches us to seek after wisdom shall be shown, both out of the ancient Jewish Scriptures, which we also use, and out of those written since Jesus, which are believed in the Churches to be divine."

Lactantius says "that every age and order among the Christians were Christian philosophers, yea, that the very virgins and maids as they sat at their work in wool were wont to speak of God's word." Julian the Apostate upbraided the Christians that their women were "meddlers with the Scriptures." Dr. Lardner

observes concerning the writings of Lactantius, (A. D. 300,) that "He seems to show that the Christians of his time were so habituated to the language of Scripture that it was not easy for them to avoid the use of it whenever they discoursed upon things of a religious nature." —*Horne.*

In defense of the early Church the distinguished Bingham says: "It is observable that no Church anciently denied any order of Christians the use of the Holy Scriptures in the vulgar tongue, since even the catechumens themselves, who were but an imperfect sort of Christians, were exhorted and commanded to read the canonical books in all churches, and the apocryphal books in some churches, for moral instruction. Nay, if we may believe Bede, they were obliged to get some of the Holy Scriptures by heart, as a part of their exercise and discipline, before they were baptized. For he commends it as a laudable custom in the ancient Church that such as were to be cate-

chised and baptized were taught the beginnings of the four Gospels, and the intent and order of them, at the time when the ceremony of opening their ears was solemnly used, that they might know and remember what and how many those books were from whence they were to be instructed in the true faith. So far were they from locking up the Scriptures from any order of men in an unknown tongue that they thought them useful and instructive."

The same eminent Christian archæologist gives the following interesting facts concerning the catechumens, and also concerning the customs of the early Church in its public services:

"The author of the Apostolical Constitutions prescribes these several heads of instruction: Let the catechumen be taught before baptism the knowledge of the Father unbegotten, the knowledge of his only begotten Son, and Holy Spirit; let him learn the order of the world's creation, and series of Divine providence, and the different sorts of legislation; let him be

taught why the world, and man, the citizen of the world, were made; let him be instructed about his own nature, to understand for what end he himself was made; let him be informed how God punished the wicked with water and fire, and crowned his saints with glory in every generation, namely, Seth, Enos, Enoch, Noah, Abraham and his posterity, Melchizedek, Job, Moses, Joshua, Caleb, and Phineas the priest, and the saints of every age. Let him also be taught how the providence of God never forsook mankind, but called them at sundry times from error and vanity to the knowledge of the truth, reducing them from slavery and impiety to liberty and godliness, and from iniquity to righteousness. He must also learn the doctrine of Christ's incarnation, his passion, his resurrection and assumption, and what it is to renounce the devil and enter into covenant with Christ.*

* What is thought of this course of training for unbaptized subjects of the Church? How would a fully initiated modern Christian stand an examination on these points?

"It was a peculiar custom in the African Church, when the preacher chanced to cite some remarkable text of Scripture in the middle of his sermon, for the people to join with him in repeating the close of it. St. Austin takes notice of this in one of his sermons, where, having begun those words of St. Paul, 'The end of the commandment is—' before he would proceed any further he called to the people to repeat the remainder of the verse with him, upon which they all cried out immediately, 'Charity out of a pure heart.' By which, he says, they showed that they had not been unprofitable hearers. And this, no doubt, was done to encourage the people to hear and read and remember the Scriptures, that they might be able upon occasion to repeat such useful portions of them, having their liberty not only to hear, but to read and repeat them in their mother-tongue.

"There is one thing more must be taken notice of with relation to the hearers, because

it expressed a great deal of zeal and diligence in their attention: which is, that many of them learned the art of notaries, that they might be able to take down in writing the sermons of famous preachers word for word as they delivered them. St. Austin makes the same observation concerning his own sermons upon the Psalms: that it pleased the brethren not only to receive them with their ears and heart, but with their pens likewise; so that he was to have regard not only to his auditors, but his readers also.

The appointment of *teachers*, referred to in the Epistles, recognizes the school element of the Church: "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular; and God hath set some in the Church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers. . . . And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. . . .

Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching; or he that exhorteth, on exhortation." All these officers are given "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." Paul contemplates the growth of the believers through the truth, every joint supplying somewhat, every part working effectually, making "increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." He says, "The body is not one member but many. Now ye are the body of Christ and members in particular. And God hath set some in the Church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly *teachers*, after that miracles; then gifts of healing, helps, governments, diver-

sities of tongues." These "prophets" spake unto men "to edification and exhortation and comfort." The "evangelists," according to Olshausen, "journeying about, labored for the wider extension of the Gospel." So the "teachers," according to Clarke, (Rom. xii, 7,) "were persons whose office it was to instruct others, whether by catechising, or simply explaining the grand truths of Christianity."

Dr. Macknight, on Rom. xii, 7, 8, says: "The teacher, I suppose, addresses the understanding of his hearers, giving them instruction in the doctrines of the Gospel, perhaps in the way of question and answer, especially when the first principles were to be taught." "If our gift be prophecy, etc., or if our gifts fit us for the stated ministry of the word, let us be diligent in preaching, not disheartened by dangers; or if one's gifts fit him for teaching the ignorant, let him be diligent in teaching such."

"A pastor was a teacher, although every teacher might not be a pastor, but in many cases be

confined to the office of subordinate instruction, whether as an expounder of doctrine, a catechist, or even a more private instructor of those who as yet were unacquainted with the first principles of the Gospel of Christ."—*Dr. A. Stevens.*

Benson on Rom. xii, 8, says: "'*He that teacheth*' the ignorant; who is appointed to instruct the catechumens and to fit them for the communion of the Church." And, on Eph. iv, 11: "It is probable the peculiar office of those here termed teachers, as distinguished from those called pastors, was to instruct the young and ignorant in the first principles of the Christian religion. And they likewise were doubtless fitted for their work by such gifts as were necessary to the right discharging thereof."

"No system can be made to accord with this passage, [Eph. iv, 16,] any more than with the general spirit of the New Testament, wherein the pulpit is the sole provision for instruction, admonition, and exhortation; the great bulk of

the members of the Church being merely recipients, each living a stranger to the spiritual concerns of the others, and no 'effectual working' of every joint and every part for mutual strengthening being looked for. It is not enough that arrangements to promote mutual edification be permitted, at the discretion of individual pastors or officers; means of grace wherein fellow-Christians shall on set purpose have 'fellowship' one with another, 'speak often one to another, exhort one another, confess their faults one to another,' and 'pray one for another,' shall teach and 'admonish one another in all wisdom,' are not dispensable appendages, but of the essence of a Church of Christ."—*Rev. William Arthur.*

"We read in the eighth book of the 'Apostolical Constitution,' 'Let him who teaches, if he be a layman, be versed in the Word.' . . . It remains an established fact that *all believers* had the right to teach in public worship."—*Pressensé.*

Thus we see that the Early Church of Christ was a school. It was designed, like the synagogues and "assemblies" of the Jews, for worship and for the thorough investigation of the Holy Scriptures; with what increase of opportunity and illumination we have already seen. Its members were to "teach" and "edify" each other. The "word of Christ was to dwell richly" among them. They were to grow in "knowledge" as well as in "grace," to "add to faith, virtue, and to virtue, *knowledge;*" to be "strong," and "overcome the wicked one," through the "*word of God abiding* in them." In order to this there were "diversities of gifts," and "differences of administrations," but the same Lord; and in the Church "the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal." "All these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will. For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so

also in Christ." The excellent William Arthur in speaking of the divers gifts of the Spirit, says, "Spiritual office and spiritual gifts vary greatly in degree, honor, and authority, and he who has the less ought to reverence him who has the greater, remembering who it is that dispenses them; but the greater should never attempt to extinguish the less, and to reduce the exercise of spiritual gifts within the limits of the public and ordained ministry. To do so is to depart from spiritual Christianity." We have little doubt that the "teachers" referred to by the apostle were a class of persons who gave special attention to this department of instruction, and aided the regular ministry in the edification of the Church. They were laymen, and endowed with the gift of the Holy Ghost.

We add a quotation or two to enforce the doctrine already so strongly sustained by the theory and example of the primitive Church.

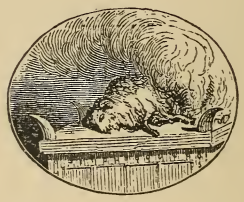
"The work is likely to go poorly on if there

be no hands employed in it but the ministers. God giveth not any of his gifts to be buried, but for common use. By a prudent improvement of the gifts of the more able Christians, we may receive much help by them, and prevent their abuse."—*Baxter.*

"The wind bloweth where it listeth, and the Spirit of God never surrenders its sovereign freeness. The advocates of the hierarchy do not deny that the miraculous gifts were bestowed on the Christians generally; but they assert, on behalf of the ecclesiastics, a monopoly of the gift of teaching, the use of which must, they maintain, be regulated by official and sovereign authority, or doctrinal anarchy will inevitably follow. This distinction, however, is wholly arbitrary. The synagogue already acknowledged, under certain limitations, the right of every pious Jew to teach."—*Pressensé.*

The work thus contemplated and performed by the early Church—the work of edification through the truth, taught in the most

thorough and effective way by persons appointed for that purpose—remains to be carried on, and by similar modes, in the Church to-day. We regard the Sunday school in its highest form as the divine method for reaching this end.



I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.

Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.

CHAPTER VI.

THE PASTOR.

I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me . . . putting me into the ministry.—1 TIM. i, 12.

PAUL unto Timothy, a chief and beloved Pastor: "These things write I unto thee . . . that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." The Church of God, as "the pillar and ground of the truth," lifts up, publishes, protects, and perpetuates the truth. It aims to restore our race to a state of perfect harmony with the God of truth; its chief instrumentality is the word of truth; its agent is the Holy Ghost, the spirit of truth; its human helpers are preachers and teachers of the truth. In the Scriptures it is written, (let us not weary of the words): "And he gave

some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."

The Sunday school in its *mission form*, as we have seen, is the Church preaching the truth outside of the regular sanctuary to those whom it has not been able to reach from its pulpits; it is the Church folding to Christian hearts in personal care, love, and sympathy for more effective instruction in truth the little ones who have never, at their own homes, known what Christian care and tenderness meant; it is the Church seeking disciples of truth for the Master, as did the seventy whom he sent out from his presence while he was on earth. These mission schools are the outposts, and at the same time the recruiting offices of the Church

militant. Rather, they are the lower schools and academies tributary to the great central university by whose authority, and for whose advantage, they exist.

Has the divinely appointed preacher of truth and Pastor of the Church any thing to do with the Church in this form of its activity? Where are his services *more* needed?

The Sunday school in its *Church form* is the Church drilling the enlisted recruits, or, (to use the New Testament figure,) training the disciples of Christ, old and young, in truth, work and character by means of the Holy Scriptures, teaching, reproving, correcting, and instructing in righteousness, "that the man of God *may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*" In fact, the Church is itself a school of religion, Pastors are its head-teachers, death the limit of its term, and heaven the higher department, where Christ himself, the great teacher, shall lead his disciples by fountains of living truth forever.

Has the divinely appointed preacher of truth and Pastor of the Church any thing to do with the Church in *this* mode of its activity? If not, what *is* he for?

The question as to how a minister "*ought to behave*" *himself* in the house of God, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth, is, therefore, legitimate and important.

We waive the full discussion of the minister's ecclesiastical authority in the Sunday school. We have no heart for it. He who lays claim to any precedence on account of an ecclesiastical prerogative will have too little heart for real Sunday school work to render his service there very efficient. Official pre-eminence, not tempered and toned by the spirit of Christian tenderness, equality, and humility, can only excite contempt. A puppet king in a puppet pantomime is more dignified than he who plays the prelate in the Sunday school because he is Pastor and has the right from Churchdom to do it.

The Sunday school is pre-eminently the field for laic labor, and yet the Pastor of the Church is Pastor of the school. He has the same abstract right to guide in all matters that pertain to instruction in his Sunday school that he has in his pulpit; but, since the larger part of the labor performed in the school is, and must of necessity be, performed by the laity, it behooves the Pastor to divide with his assistants an authority which he acquires originally by virtue of his office as teacher, and to a share in which they become entitled by entering upon that office and faithfully performing their measure of its duties.

In harmony with this theory of responsibility, we assert that the Sunday school can never so belong to the laity as to justify it in putting an injunction upon the Pastor's oversight and direction there. His is the original right. The laymen become sharers in it by virtue of their service, and the Pastor should conserve these mutual rights with prudence, fidelity, and

delicacy. We do not believe that there are many cases of collision between the Pastor and the school. While in a few instances within our own sphere of observation, from a false theory of the school as an independency, or from the personal sensitiveness of a superintendent, more fond of authority than fitted for its exercise, the school and Pastor have seemed to move inharmoniously, we believe that in the vast majority of cases there is no such difficulty. On the contrary, we venture the assertion that superintendents generally, for the sake of securing more of the Pastor's presence, sympathy, and influence, would be glad to find him infringing a little upon their constitutional prerogatives.

Against clerical arrogance, perfunctoriness, and practical incompetency, every right-minded superintendent must of necessity protest. Such protests are rarely entered, because such Pastors, happily, are but rarely found.

Let us look at the Pastor in his several

positions—in the *study*, in the *pulpit*, in *pastoral work*, and in the *school*, itself—and let us ask, What are his peculiar duties in reference to the Sabbath school, seeing that he does sustain a close and intimate relation to it?

I. *What may the Pastor do in the* STUDY *in behalf of the school or schools connected with his Church?* In the midst of theological and literary labors, while preparing for the pulpit, while devising ways and means for the development of his Church, what should he do for the Sunday school?

1. He may there daily *pray* for divine wisdom justly to appreciate the school and judiciously to direct its affairs. Prayer is the most effective of all preparatives for labor. Prayer kindles zeal. Prayer sharpens the intellect. Prayer secures many a wise suggestion, and begets many a practical device. Apathy in reference to any department of labor may be counteracted by fervent prayer. By prayer our Pastors may answer the sophistical argument

of Satan, couched in that word "inadaptation," by which so often he leads us to justify our neglect of the plainer duties of the pastoral office. In his study, amid the mental struggles and tensions of his life, he may now and then rest in the sweet power of prayer, and plead for the teachers of his school, the scholars, and their parents. Thus may he indorse before the court of heaven the endeavors and pleadings of his fellow-laborers.

2. He may take time to investigate, and fully to understand, the true aims, relations, and methods of the Sunday school. Said one successful Pastor and able preacher, "I make it a point to read up the literature of the Sunday school." The weekly and monthly periodicals, the reports of conventions and institutes, the manuals, essays on special phases of this work, etc., etc., contain many practical suggestions which, as professional teachers, every minister might read with advantage. A very little time every week devoted to this labor would amply

repay any Pastor even though he did not covet the reputation of being a "Sunday school man." Ministers who now speak lightly of the Sunday school might, after a more thorough examination into its philosophy, history, and ecclesiastical relations, be led to a higher appreciation of it as a regular and long-established department of Church work.

3. He may in his study fully acquaint himself with the lessons of the school. He should have a voice in the selection of these lessons, and every week should carefully and thoroughly investigate the passages which are to be used on the ensuing Sabbath. In the teachers' meeting he will then be ready for questions and suggestions. In the prayer-meeting he will be able to present the leading truth of the lesson. In casual conversation his questions, allusions, and explanations will excite the interest of parents, scholars, and teachers in Bible study. Such an example would be a stimulus to the whole Church, and the Pastor's

work in his study would bear fruit in the Church and the family.

II. *What may the Pastor do in the* PULPIT *in behalf of his Sunday school?*

1. He may invariably announce the school, its place and hour of meeting, and the lesson for that day's investigation. By this means the attention of the entire Church is called to one of its most important departments, and all are reminded of its claims upon them. How frequently is it the case that while evening service, prayer-meetings, class-meetings, official meetings, and even choir meetings, are announced, not one word is said in the pulpit concerning the Bible school of the Church.

2. He may occasionally supplement this notice by a cordial invitation to the entire congregation to attend its sessions. On the lips of some ministers we wot of, this invitation would warm into an earnest plea. We know men who have thus increased the attendance at their schools over seventy-five per cent. in a few weeks. They

regard the school as a part of the Church, the Bible as God's medium of grace, and all Church members as "disciples" of Christ. They believe that a neglect of Bible study is one of the greatest hinderances to spiritual growth, and one of the most prevalent "sins of omission" in the Church of this age; so they seek to honor God's word, and to promote the growth, enrichment, and power of God's people. Such convictions make themselves heard on God's day in God's house, and the people go home to "look up the lesson," and then go to the school to "search the Scriptures." Finding the service so sweet, and the fellowship of the Sunday school room so refreshing, they go again and again.

3. He may frequently, in connection with the pulpit "notices," address himself especially to the parents and guardians of the children who attend his school, explaining its purpose and plans, and pleading for such commands and co-operation as shall secure the preparation at home

of every lesson by the scholars. A simple explanation in the pulpit of the plan of "Home Readings" in the Berean Series of Lessons would enlist many families in the delightful service of Bible reading each morning in the line of thought suggested by the lesson for the ensuing Sabbath. Many parents forget the claims of the Sunday school upon them in this particular. A reminder from the pulpit would always have a good effect.

4. He may regularly *pray* for the school, its officers and teachers, in the hearing of the congregation. The Pastor's plea may warm into prayerfulness the teacher's heart, and remind parents and pupils who are present of the importance and value of the service which the school is performing for them. We invariably, in our Sabbath morning pulpit prayers, recognize the class-leaders and Sunday school teachers of a Methodist Episcopal Church as really and equally *sub-pastors*, the assistants of the chief Pastor in his holy and arduous work.

5. He may in the course of the year preach on several phases of the Sunday school, and this without making sermons on the subject as a "specialty." Its work is so extensive, its relations so manifold, that without incurring the charge of "sameness," "repetition," "hobbyism," a minister may often allude to it.

6. He may occasionally resolve his congregation into a school, and his sermons may take the form of lectures. The geographical features are illustrated by a map. The congregation is encouraged to hold Bibles open, and refer to passages indicated and then expounded by the preacher. We have known even the blackboard to be used, proposition after proposition as established by appropriate texts being written out, and then with clearness and power applied to a most attentive and interested audience. This would not do invariably, perhaps not frequently; and yet we venture that the Pastor who dares to do it occasionally will educate and delight his people, awaken new zeal in

scriptural investigations, and not a whit diminish the spirituality of his Church.

7. He may preach upon the subjects which are used by the school for weekly lessons; or at least refer to these subjects, illustrate some part of his sermon each week by them, and thus increase the interest of teachers and scholars in his discourses. Themes about which we have thought closely for a week, we are more anxious to hear discussed than any other; and where it is known that the Pastor will have something to say on the "lesson for the day," all members of the school will be anxious to hear him. There is a possibility of great results in this plan of uniform lessons through a Church, and nothing contributes more fully to its success than the approval and co-operation of the pulpit.

We would not hamper a Pastor by selecting subjects for his discourse beforehand, but, asking him to assist in the selection of the subjects, we beg that he will every Sabbath bring into the

field of observation (giving it more or less time and prominence) the "one bright particular star" of truth toward which as a Sunday school we for that week direct our special attention. By no plan can a preacher more certainly secure the eyes and ears of the little people in the congregation, and certainly his most appreciative hearers will prize discussions which may be made available in the investigations and instructions of the school where they are teachers or adult pupils.

8. He may preach so that the very young and the very dull hearers in his congregation will understand something in every sermon. We say, "the very young," because the ordinary child of from ten to fifteen years of age requires no special adaptation of the sermon other than that which the ordinary adult may demand. We undervalue the capacities of our youthful auditors. In our attempts to "come down to them" we run no small risk of being ourselves brought "down" in their esteem.

We especially plead for directness and simplicity in preaching to every body. There are opportunities enough through the press, on the rostrum, and in the special class, for profound discussions of matters beyond the ken and compass of the masses. In the pulpit we want wholesome, practical, doctrinal and experimental teaching that every body can understand. We may write theological essays like Paul, if called to it and qualified for it; but when we preach, let it be as Paul preached before Festus and on Mars' Hill, or as Peter preached at Jerusalem, or as Jesus perpetually preached in Galilee—in a plain, popular, earnest way for the saving of souls and for the edification of saints. There are subjects enough in the great Book to give variety to our sermons, and still keep us within the range of our people's thought. The author of "Sword and Garment" is responsible for the following incident about Dr. Dwight: "A young clergyman said to him, 'What is the best method of treating very difficult and abstruse

points in mental philosophy?' 'I cannot give you any information upon the subject,' replied the Doctor, 'I am not familiar with such topics. I leave them for young men.'" If "themes profound" must claim our attention, let us heed Aristotle's good advice to his pupils: "Think like the wise; speak like the common people." "Simplicity," says Lord Jeffrey, "is the last attainment of progressive literature; and men are very long afraid of being natural for fear of being taken as ordinary."

Let us preach to the people on the people's themes, in the people's tongue, for the people's salvation. So shall the little ones be held and edified, and the blessing of Him be upon us who "set a little child in the midst" of his disciples that by looking down toward him they might be lifted up by the exalting grace of humility and simplicity and faith.

III. From the study and the pulpit we follow our Pastor into the social arena, where his power as a man is most quickly and immediately felt.

Now he is to illustrate his own sermons. The graces he depicts so glowingly in the pulpit are to be found or *missed* by his people in the friendly fellowships of his every-day life. The earnestness of his public appeals is to be tested. As we have inquired concerning the "study" and "pulpit," so now, as to this third department, we ask: What may the Pastor do in his PASTORAL or SOCIAL WORK in behalf of the Sunday school?

1. He may keep a list of all his teachers and scholars, and become to a considerable extent personally acquainted with them. This personal acquaintance will give him such access to them as no public instructions can secure. The list of names may be had for the asking. The most unreliable memory may be improved to a remarkable degree by the habit of inquiring concerning names, recognizing the faces of those to whom they belong, and daily practicing this identification of persons. It is a little thing indeed to be able to name at sight every

scholar in one's school, but on that little thing often hinges a Pastor's permanent influence, a child's education, or, more than all, the conversion of an immortal soul.

2. The true Pastor serves as a link between the Sunday school and the family, securing mutual co-operation. His words, dropped incidentally at the fireside, convince parents that it is their duty to insist upon the children's home preparation of the Sunday school lesson. The question of the Pastor leads to a question by the parent, and we find Willie and Mary, and all the rest, at home conning the text of next Sabbath's lesson. Indeed, they are the more eager to do this from a casual question asked by the same faithful Pastor as he met them that morning on their way to school. The Pastor's interest touching the children on the street and the parents in the parlor works out a good result in the open Bible, the memorized text, and the recitation, first to each other and then to their parents, of next Sunday's lesson. The teacher

at first wonders at the change, but soon discovers that *the Pastor is abroad.*

3. In another way our good Pastor aids the school in these social ministrations. His oft-repeated query about Bible study at home and at school suggests to the adults in every family the possibility, practicability, propriety, and, finally, the absolute necessity of regularly attending the school. They never knew before this what a beautiful and profitable and dignified institution the Sunday school is. To their thought it was a place for children only, a song-singing and flag-flaunting and speech-making and story-telling service. Now it is an "assembly" like the select meetings of the old Jews, who convened after the synagogue service was over for meditation, conversation, and discussion. It is a regular Berean band for Bible research. It is the "people's college" for instruction in the wonderful truths of this wonderful Book of God. When, therefore, the Sunday school superintendent finds fathers and mothers, deacons,

elders, class-leaders, physicians, lawyers, tradesmen, etc., etc., flocking to the school, first as spectators and then as students, *he* concludes that the Pastor is abroad.

4. The Pastor may employ the scholars of his school as aids in the various philanthropic labors which his zeal inspires and his skill devises. His school, or so much of it as he can enlist, constitutes the "Pastor's Band of Helpers." To be a "helper" is the ambition of every pupil in that Church. New families are watched. From one to five hundred wide-awake eyes are on the new houses or the new "movings" into town. They emulate each other in making early reports to him concerning the new-comers, and he is speedily "abroad" again. The "helpers" become his tract distributers. At any time he can flood the Church and community in less than six hours with a printed tract on any given topic, and these, as a reminder of something he said in the pulpit last Sabbath, or in anticipation of something he proposes to dis-

cuss next Sabbath, become most valuable aids in his pulpit labors. He becomes another Briareus, and with more than fifty heads and more than a hundred hands watches, directs, and develops his Church.

5. He may much in the same way, but for higher and more delicate services, employ the teachers of his school. Their ministry may extend into the details of a spiritual guardianship. They may visit the afflicted, converse with the serious-minded, report especial cases to their Pastor, and consult with him in reference to the immediate interests of their own pupils. Thus he utilizes for the sweetest and divinest ends the zeal of his Sunday school teachers, and makes them veritable sub-pastors in his Church.

6. In one other place we find the Pastor at work outside of the study, the pulpit, and of the school itself. It is where the members of his "official board," "session," "vestry," or by whatsoever name they may be known, discuss the affairs, financial and spiritual, of the Church

they represent. Here the Pastor's voice is heard in effective protest against the meager and miserable financial support the Sunday school usually receives from the Church. No longer, under his ministry, do little children go about begging for pennies to furnish library books, curtain windows, carpet floors, etc. The school takes its place on the list of legitimate objects for Church support, and the moneys collected for the whole are distributed among Pastor, school, organist, sexton, church repair committee, etc.

Thus one popular ground of objection to the Sunday school is removed, and its leaders go forward with self-respect to do their noble work in the noblest way. Blessed is the Church whose affairs are superintended by such a man, and thrice blessed the Sunday school that can call him "Our Pastor!"

IV. In the SCHOOL *its If what shall our Pastor do?*

1. Whatever be his specific work there, what-

ever the theoretical relation which he may sustain, one thing the true Pastor will invariably secure—perfect harmony of feeling between himself and the officers of the school. He will never come into collision with them as a body, and will do his utmost to maintain pleasant relations even with those against whose negligence or inefficiency he may be compelled to protest.

2. He will recognize the superintendent's authority in the school. *Ex officio* the Pastor is, in one sense, superintendent. His relation is very much like that of the President of the United States to the army of the United States —not emphasizing the military aspect of our comparison too strongly. To the superintendent, as the Pastor's subordinate, the Church has committed a specific trust—as much to relieve the Pastor as any thing else—and it behooves the latter to insure the largest freedom to this substitute in the discharge of his duties.

The wise Pastor secures as much service as

possible from his lay members. He never does any work that he can induce a member of his Church to perform as acceptably and successfully as himself.

The school having been committed to the care of the subordinate, our model Pastor never trespasses upon the superintendent's prerogatives there. These, conscientiously respected by the Pastor, are not exactingly exercised by the superintendent, and there is a sort of rivalry between them to secure double honor each for the other, which gives confidence, unity, and power to the school, such as it could never secure under an administration weakened by petty jealousies and contemptible competitions.

3. The Pastor will occasionally conduct the "General Review" of the lesson. Indeed, unless the superintendent has special facility in this, we regard it as a service belonging to the Pastor. It is here that his office as "Head Teacher" touches the school, and the methods and success of his subordinates are brought to

the test. But in this he will be careful to avoid the very appearance of trespassing upon the superintendent's ground.

4. The Pastor will arrange with the superintendent for special opportunities to drill the school in the Catechism, in sacred geography, history, etc., etc. Once a month, perhaps, after the regular lesson and review for the day have been completed, the Pastor may introduce a special service called (as by one Pastor of our acquaintance) "The Evangelistery," or (as by another) "The Pastoral," designed to drill the school in the Ten Commandments, the Apostles' Creed, the Lord's Prayer, choice selections from the Bible, (such as the *Beatitudes*, the *Twenty-third Psalm*, etc.,) old hymns and tunes of the Church, etc., etc. Such an exercise, joined in heartily by teachers and scholars, occupying but a few minutes each month, would perhaps give the Pastor more permanent influence than a too frequent appearance before his school.

5. The Pastor will not interrupt classes during the regular study hour by visitations and conversations. Our theory is that no one (not even the superintendent) should visit any class during the lesson hour.

6. He will watch jealously the literature of the school, co-operating with the superintendent and a judicious committee in selecting the proper books and papers for distribution.

7. We think that ordinarily the Pastor should not be required to teach a class in Sunday school, especially if he is expected to preach two sermons besides on the same day. There are circumstances which justify the opposite course. Where he is the only man who can *hold* a certain grade of young intellects in his school, the Pastor may be expected to accept the position of teacher; but he should keep on the lookout for some strong man or woman to take his place as soon as possible.

V. *What may the Pastor do* DURING THE WEEK *for the Sunday school of which he has charge?*

Knowing that the single hour a week usually devoted to its sessions is not sufficient to accomplish the full results contemplated by this institution, the Pastor will seriously inquire *how* the week-day power of the Sunday school may be augmented. In his own reply to this practical question we shall find his measure of responsibility recognized, and the outline of his duties laid down.

1. The Pastor may hold a regular teachers' meeting every week. He may recognize it as one of the established services of his Church, announcing it on the Sabbath, carefully preparing for its exercises, consecrating zeal, time, and talents to it, convincing the Church of the high estimate he places upon it, and then, by his admirable management of its services, he may win and retain every Sunday school teacher as a regular attendant and student.

2. It does not follow from the above statement that the Pastor should invariably conduct the teachers' meeting, and yet it is primarily his

right to do so. He is the "pastor and teacher" of the whole Church. With him rests the responsibility as to the doctrines of which his Church is, in all its departments, the exponent. It is his duty to see that all the subordinate teachers and officers of his Church are correct in their theory of religion, consistent in their daily lives, and competent to instruct the youth and adults of whom the Holy Ghost has made him overseer. In many cases the abundant labors of the Pastor in other departments, and the special fitness of the superintendent or other person, may justify the performance of this service by other than the Pastor. As a matter of expediency, or by a special arrangement of the Church itself, the superintendent may regularly conduct the teachers' meeting. But where there is a Pastor the original right and responsibility in this matter are with him. A wise Pastor always secures as much service as possible from his Church, but never forgets that he is responsible for the matter, measure, and

method of instruction in the Holy Scriptures which his Church imparts. He will, however, carefully conserve that most important of all the elements of Church power—mutual charity. The maintenance of authority at the expense of charity is a questionable gain.

3. He may, during the week, hold other and special services, varying in their character, but all designed to expound and apply the word of God, and to promote the habit of Bible reading and study among his people. How much, for example, a minister might accomplish by giving a series of "drills" in Bible history and geography, or by occasional lectures on Bible archæology, natural history, etc. How often the collation of Scripture texts by a large audience, enforcing a single doctrine of the Bible, might be made the medium of spiritual power to a Church. Now we believe that every Pastor should labor to promote and popularize Bible study; and he who rightly prizes, and himself personally and professionally *searches* and *loves* God's word,

will not only find time for such special labor, but will throw into it such genuine earnestness, and multiply such skillful devices, as to render "our Pastor's week-evening Bible service" a most popular and powerful agency for winning souls and edifying the Church.

The wise and ingenious author of "Ad Clerum" suggests: "Wherever the exercises of the pulpit are sustained with vigor, the Bible class will be found powerfully instrumental for good; and where pulpit duties are inefficiently discharged, something is requisite to supplement their deficiencies and compensate for their weakness."

We shall be excused for making another quotation from Dr. Parker:

"In the Bible you will find scope enough for the exhaustion of all your ability and resources without frittering away your time on things too high for you. I have found it very convenient and profitable to follow up in a Bible class a course of expository preaching: say, for

example, you are expounding one of the Gospels in a series of Sunday morning lectures; get the members of your Bible class to take notes of your exposition, and to give the criticism or argument in their own words. This will supply an excellent basis for further discussion in class; and if your experience correspond to my own, you will often receive suggestions enough to enable you to prepare a second and better lecture on your last Sunday morning's subject. You will probably find a difficulty in getting some of your members to adopt the habit of taking notes and making abstracts or paraphrases, but a little gentle persuasion in private will often secure the object you have in view. In conducting processes of this kind I have received many a hint as to the best method of preaching. You find out the ignorance of your hearers; you see how they mistake the meaning of words which to the preacher are quite simple; you feel how slow they are to comprehend any process of reasoning, and how little

account they can give of arguments on which you set great store. These facts will often clip the wings of your soaring rhetoric, and force you, if you are an honest steward, to preach not for yourself, but to others. This is the condescension which comes of being crucified with the Saviour, and this the holy desire which is intent on the one infinitely blessed object of saving the souls of them that hear the holy word from your lips."

Here, too, we may quote a letter from the interesting life of Dr. James Hamilton by William Arnot. The letter was written to his friend June 16, 1840, but it has the ring of a Sunday school man of 1872 who had decided to "teach by the use of objects in the new style."

"MY DEAR WILLIAM:—The war must be carried on at all points. Like you, we have got Sabbath schools, and, like you, I mean to enlighten the children on Bible botany. This

letter is an order for the requisite ammunition; and though it implies a vast deal of trouble, your ecclesiastical zeal will come to the help of your patience, and your brotherly love to the help of both. Send me, therefore, the following articles: three volumes 'Library of Entertaining Knowledge—Forest Trees, Fruits, Vegetable Substances;' Harris's 'Natural History of the Bible;' Paxton's 'Illustrations,' the botanical volume, (these two from Divinity Library,) and, failing these, any good book on the subject; 'Edinburgh University Annual,' if you can get it from any one, for my essay. Item: from Jane the brown parcel of fruits which I gave her, the cone from Lebanon, and the twig of sycamore. Among the papers in my herbarium, next the window, is a twig of olive and a piece of red everlasting from Tabor. I think they are wrapped up in a piece of paper. Item: roll up the palm leaf into a coil, which I think may be done without breaking it. Buy a pomegranate, by all means, if it can be got; a

few almonds and walnuts, both in the shell. In some apothecary's or perfumer's you may be able to get me a bit of frankincense, and it would be a great affair if I could get a few olives, well preserved in a vial. They may be had in a confectioner's. Also some dates from a fruiterer. When all these are packed, send them per Saturday's steamer.

"Ever yours, affectionately,

"JAMES HAMILTON."

4. The Pastor may, through the teachers' meeting, the Bible service, and in special *normal classes*, develop the teaching power of the Church, raising up from the young men and women in his Sunday school a corps of consecrated, competent, and enthusiastic teachers and class-leaders. The distinction, by the way, between the office of Sunday school teacher and that of class-leader is not so great as custom and general conviction have made it. We need more class-leading Sunday school teachers.

Not less do we need Bible-teaching class-leaders. The normal class instructions of an enterprising and efficient Pastor will return speedily in the increased efficiency of these his helpers.

Since the Sunday school teacher is the Pastor's assistant, and since his efforts may so effectually supplement the efforts of the pulpit, to whom, if not to the Pastor, shall the Sunday school teacher look for assistance? The Pastor is *ex officio* the teacher of his teachers. He is their professor of biblical interpretation and systematic theology.

The minister should, therefore, be *a thorough biblical scholar*. If he has been trained in a theological seminary, he should not despise, so as to forget, the rudiments of that training. If he never enjoyed these advantages, he should spend some time every day in making up for the earlier deficiencies. An hour or two a day, systematically devoted to reading and study, with reference to this acquisition, will in two or three years enable him to consult the original

of the Old and New Testaments, make him familiar with sacred archæology in its several branches, and with all else that appertains to biblical interpretation. The fact that he prosecutes these studies in order to teach, and the constant effort of simplifying and systematizing his knowledge, will make it doubly valuable to him, and more than compensate for the failure of his earlier years.

5. He may attend, as frequently as practicable, Sunday school conventions and institutes, both union and denominational, that he may observe carefully the methods adopted by other workers, imbibe somewhat of their spirit, and communicate no less than he receives, because of the peculiar zeal and persistent fidelity with which at home he prosecutes his work.

All thy children shall be taught of the Lord.

O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!

Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand; for I will make him a great nation.

Take this child away, and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages.

As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man;
So are children of the youth.
Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them:
They shall not be ashamed,
But they shall speak with the enemies in the gate.

That our sons may be as plants
Grown up in their youth;
That our daughters may be as corner stones,
Polished after the similitude of a palace.

And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the Son of David; they were sore displeased.

CHAPTER VII.

THE CHILDREN AND THE CHURCH.

"Forbid them not to come unto me."—MATT. xix, 14.

NO one who has read "The Last Days of Pompeii" can forget the sudden advent of Sallust into the arena of the Pompeiian amphitheater, dragging in with him the priest Calenus, and crying out, "Remove the Athenian! haste—he is innocent! Arrest Arbaces the Egyptian—HE is the murderer of Apacides!"

The people cried out, "*Arbaces to the Lion!*" The prætor called out, "Officer, remove the accused Glaucus."

"As the prætor gave the word of release there was a cry of joy—a female voice—a child's voice, and it was of joy! It rang through the heart of the assembly with electric force; it was touching, it was holy, that child's voice. And

the populace echoed it back with sympathizing congratulation. 'Silence!' said the grave prætor—'who is there?' 'The blind girl—Nydia,' answered Sallust; 'it is her hand that has raised Calenus from the grave, and delivered Glaucus from the lions.'"

So the voice of the child rings through the earth. Every-where it is "touching, it is holy, that child's voice." It calls out from the realm of innocency and faith and joyousness to the world of guilt and of evil consciousness and of despair. Thank God for the ministry of the child!

> "Nearer I seem to God while gazing upon thee!
> 'Tis ages since he made his youngest star;
> His hand were on thee as 'twere yesterday,
> Thou later revelation!
> * * * * *
> O bright and singing babe,
> What shalt thou be hereafter?"

The Christian Church answers this question; answers it as no other religious faith on the earth has been able to answer it.

"What shalt thou be hereafter?" Behold Him of Nazareth standing with outstretched hands: "Suffer the little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven!"

We have not heretofore spoken of the Sunday school as though it were exclusively for the instruction of children. We do not so regard it, and do not so speak of it. We have been trying to call the attention of the Church to the fact that the Sunday school is designed to promote a thorough knowledge of the word of God, and a thorough training in the Christian life. This being its aim, and adults needing such knowledge and training as much as children, we have tried to interest adults in the Sunday school. The children will attend the school of the Church without much persuasion. They should also be brought up to a regular attendance at the preaching service. They should early be led to a personal knowledge of Christ and an identification of themselves

with the Church. To these two topics let us give some attention.

First, *the attendance of children upon preaching*. It is desirable. The service is one divinely appointed. It is a means of spiritual quickening. It is an intellectual stimulant. It elevates the tastes. It is a wholesome way of passing a portion of God's day. It is calculated to exert a great influence upon the child as a member of society and of the nation whose prosperity so much depends upon the recognition of God. The reverence there begotten for the minister, as an embassador of heaven, has a beneficial effect. The worship is inspiring. Blessed are the children whose feet tread the courts of the Lord's house on the day of the Lord; who go thither from habit, never having known any thing else from earliest childhood!

We are familiar with the usual objections: "The child cannot understand the sermon." Nor do all adults. We shall do well to remem-

ber that the children are more appreciative hearers than many suppose, and that with increase of culture and wisdom and tact on the part of the ministry, we shall have more simplicity and plainness of speech in the pulpit, to the advantage of both children and adults. "Our children are disinclined to go." How does it happen that they have ever had any choice in the matter? They should not remember the day when they did not attend preaching. But then, what has their disinclination to do with the claims of God and of their earthly parents? Have they not learned prompt and unquestioning obedience to a father's command? And do parents grant children a release from all uncongenial tasks? Because disinclined to it, do they neglect the week-day school and its appointed lessons? "We may prejudice our children against public service, so that when they become old they will not attend because alienated from the Church by the rigorous discipline of childhood." The opposite is true. The men and

women of our day who are most faithful in attendance on the sanctuary are those who have been habituated to it. Those who were allowed in youth "to have their own way" are not usually the most devout saints, nor the most regular in the discharge of public or private religious duties. We do not sympathize with what are called "special services for children" when they serve as an excuse for non-attendance at the public worship.

Our rule is this: Give some truth in every sermon to hearers of all capacities, to every man his portion in due season, rightly dividing the word of God, and our children will grow up to reverence and delight in the sanctuary and in the law of the Lord.

Let ministers urge upon heads of families the importance of this duty, and then let them study so to read the Scripture lessons, and order the service of song, and preach the words of eternal life, that the "duty" discharged by the parent may be by the Pastor transformed into a

"delight" to the children. So shall they bless him: and the blessing of a little child is next in preciousness to the blessing of the Lord himself.

A few words upon the second topic: *The children and Church-membership.* Whatever be the theological opinion and the ecclesiastical policy with reference to childhood and its religious life and relations, one thing is incontrovertible. The earlier a child can be brought to a personal recognition of Jesus as his Saviour, and to a personal identification with the Church, the better for him. Baptized or unbaptized in infancy, at birth a sinner or by the provisions of grace virtually a saint, with these questions we have not now to do; but as early in the child's life as possible, we say, teach him implicit trust in Christ, and the full consecration of his little life and all its possibilities to Christ. We may depend upon the co-operation of the Holy Ghost, who will supplement our lack of insight into the peculiar

nature of the child, and the immaturity of thought and conviction which we are so prone to attribute to our youth.

Let us, however, be wise with our very highest wisdom in this direction. Remembering that the conversion of the little one is the work of the Spirit, let us seek the Spirit. Remembering that the Spirit operates through the truth, let us teach the truth. Especially do we advise:

1. Distinguish between a transitory emotion easily traceable to circumstances, and the deeper and often less demonstrative work of the Spirit of God.

2. Guard against unwise public methods of "seeking religion." We believe that children should publicly profess Christ; but we are painfully aware that the very measures often adopted to secure this end are more likely to develop pride and morbid self-consciousness than piety and humility. Let God's ministers guard this interest under the leading of

God's Spirit and the dictates of their best judgment.

3. Take good care of the little disciples after the first profession. Teach them, bear with them, aid them; remember that they are children, and never seek to adjust upon their souls an overgrown type of piety which has been taken out of a "religious biography," and which was, even with the adult, an exception, if not an excrescence. Never try to take the "boy" out of a boy in order to make him a Christian. What he loses is worth more to him than what he receives in the exchange. Rather lead him into the paths of practical faith in God. Teach him the glory of hard service for Christ. Exalt principle. Store his mind with Gospel facts and maxims and promises. Teach him to pray daily, to love Jesus as he loves his mother, to be *true* always and every-where, to avoid all pretenses, to fairly represent the power and nobleness of the Christian religion at home,

in the play-ground, at school, and in the street.

Of the Sunday-school teacher as a guide and class-leader we shall speak further on.

He that ruleth, with diligence.

For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think ; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth,
And addeth learning to his lips.
Pleasant words are as an honeycomb,
Sweet to the soul, and health to the bones.

Hear ; for I will speak of excellent things ;
And the opening of my lips shall be right things.

We are taught and we teach by something about us that never goes into language at all.—Bishop Huntington.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SUPERINTENDENT.

"And Moses verily was faithful in all his house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after." —HEB. iii, 5.

THERE are three qualifications which are indispensable to the efficient Sunday school superintendent:

1. *A true personal character.* This is important, since it determines the quality and spirit of his teachings, the character of the persons whom he selects as his assistants, and makes itself felt in the very atmosphere of the school-room. His unconscious influence should be helpful and holy. He is all the while communicating a personal, involuntary influence. Like Hercules, of whom it was said, "Whether he walked or stood or sat down, he conquered,"

—the Sunday school superintendent is affecting the opinions, tastes, and habits of others. "We are watched," says Bishop Huntington; "we are searched through and through by those we undertake to lead; not in a jealous or malignant criticism, but in earnest, good faith." Our looks teach. "The countenance of holy men," says Chrysostom, "is full of spiritual power." Our gait, and tones of voice, and spontaneous expressions, and the reputations we have, all are full of teaching energy. A superintendent should be a man of unsullied name; a man whom it pays a teacher or a scholar to think about; who, when his name is casually mentioned, or by some association suggested, during the week, brings to the heart a feeling of gladness and gratitude and aspiration. There is scarcely a scholar who does not have occasion to think about his superintendent a score of times every week. Well for both if the accidental recurrence of the superintendent's name or face or voice brings a holier purpose to the pupil.

2. The second element in the successful superintendent is the *quick eye.* He must see in order to govern. He must see promptly. There are men who seem never to detect disturbing elements in their schools. They have no sensitiveness. If aware of trouble they seem unable to locate it. And so the school runs on with undetected, and of course uncorrected, evils to hamper and weaken it.

3. A man may have character and a quick eye, and yet not be a good superintendent. The third indispensable qualification is *governing tact.* He must be able to touch the spot where trouble is in the school-room. We know superintendents who stamp and ring and scold and suffer, but do not know how to make things better.

There may be inherent strength without ability to rule. The connection may be wanting between the engine and the spindles. A cog is broken. A strap has slipped. The power goes for nothing if the connection be severed.

The true superintendent has personal power, is prompt to see where its exercise is demanded, and knows just how and when and where to apply it.

We speak of the superintendent principally as a governor. As such he governs in the interest of the Church, not regarding his school as an independency. He co-operates with the Pastor. He announces all public and social Church services in the school, and does his best to secure the attendance of all. It is in no small degree owing to his efforts that the Sabbath morning service and the week evening prayer-meetings are crowded.

He governs through the teachers, as the colonel of a regiment through the captains of the several companies.

He governs in kindness, never publicly rebuking teacher or pupil—repressing disorder firmly; correcting irregularities promptly; but doing all this without appearing to be even for one moment ill at ease himself, and never in the

slightest degree violating the highest standard of courtesy.

He governs honestly. He never buys scholars from a neighboring school by the offer of costly presents, nor bribes his own scholars to proselyte in any way for the sake of enlarging the attendance. He regards all such things with ineffable scorn and contempt.

He governs in calmness. He has a strong will, and brings it to bear with heavy pressure on all departments of his school ; but it is done so gently and in so quiet a way that one might almost charge him with governing too little. He brings a school to perfect stillness at will. There is a charm in the quietness of all his movements. The school feels it, and delights to respond by respectful and attentive silence to his word of command. As governor, the superintendent is chiefly a protector. He protects scholars against demoralizing associations in the class ; against indifferent and incompetent teachers ; against the tendency so painfully

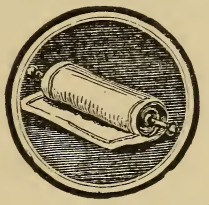
manifest in our day to irreverence in the house of God. He protects teachers against the interruptions of librarian, missionary collectors, visitors and speech-makers—in every possible way aiding and encouraging and inspiring them in their work.

He is superintendent all the week, and not only on the Sabbath. As superintendent he reads up the literature of his profession, attends institutes, visits his teachers in a pastoral way, regularly attends all public services of the Church, co-operates with the proper officers in promoting the growth of Zion, and thus prolongs his term of office indefinitely, because "faithful" like Moses "in all his house as a servant" of God and of his Church.

The superintendent has much influence in attracting adult members to the school, and in exalting the word among them. He aids the Pastor in the week-evening special classes, and will never be content until a flourishing Normal Class is giving good promise of a

band of thoroughly trained teachers for the future.

This is our ideal Superintendent of the Church School. May the number of such laborers be multiplied !



He was more honorable than the thirty, but he attained not to the first three.

And these are they whom David set over the service of song in the house of the Lord, after that the ark had rest.

Out of Machir came down governors,
And out of Zebulon they that handle the pen of the writer.

Shelomith and his brethren were over all the treasures of the dedicated things.

Of making many books there is no end.

And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

CHAPTER IX.

OTHER OFFICERS.

There are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. —1 Cor. xii, 5.

WE have recognized the Sunday school in its higher form as an integrant part of the Church ; the pastor as its head, and the superintendent as his assistant and subordinate. Thus all Church officers, elders, deacons, vestrymen, stewards, class leaders, or by whatever official title designated, become identified with the Church school ; and all so-called "officers of the school," who are essential to its organization and successful operation, become thereby exalted to the dignity of Church officials. They may be neither the head nor the heart of the "body of Christ." The lowly service which some are required to perform may cause them to be ac-

counted but the finger or the foot. And yet if the blood of the heart throb in them, their service is no mean thing in His sight who judgeth not according to man's judgment. The finger may at the last wear a lustrous jewel, and the foot tread upon golden streets. The motive of service is what determines its worth. Whatever the "administration," be it in matters high or low, as the world measures the divers ministries of the Church, "the same Lord" will use it for his glory.

We shall offer a few practical hints in this connection upon the duties of Church officers who are more immediately associated with the school department itself, premising that all who are charged with the management of ecclesiastical affairs—whether in matters material or spiritual—should feel a keen and ever-increasing interest in this branch of the Church, and should deliberate and legislate in its behalf; devising liberal financial endowments, providing commodious and comfortable quarters, supply-

ing without stint all requisite apparatus for the most successful prosecution of this work.

In the Church school there must be persons "set over the service of song." What would the Sunday school be without music? What would the music be without some responsible and well-qualified conductor? Let us say a few things about this officer.

He should believe in music as a medium of worship and as a means of grace, and this even in the Sunday school, where it has been too frequently (our pen had almost said, too commonly) a mere source of entertainment and of enjoyment. The CHORISTER we covet believes that the singing in Sunday school should be full of *worship*—sincere, reverent, joyful praise—cultivating in our youth the devotional sentiment, and uplifting them toward God in blessed communion every time they convene to consult his word. Therefore the chorister should be a Christian. This is the first requisition; and this will give an unction to his leadership which

may well compensate the lack of high professional attainment. We do not depreciate the one by strenuously advocating the other. The employment of worldly, trifling, tippling leaders of song in the Sunday schools is simply an abomination. Such men corrupt our youth, and neutralize the holy sentiment which the hymns of Zion put upon their lips.

As leader of singing in a *Church* school the chorister will use the music and the hymns of the Church so as to retain among the young people a knowledge of the "old hymns," and in this way train them to sing in the sanctuary, that the distinction may not be too marked, as is now the case between so-called "Sunday school" and "Church" music.

As a subordinate of both Pastor and Superintendent he will be guided by them in his selections, and will aim in every possible way to increase through the school the power of this important service. It will be a grand day, indeed, for the Church of Christ when

in all the public assemblies the "hosannas" of her children are heard; when the liveliest Gospel melodies of these latter days alternate in the sanctuary with the more grand and stately tunes of a former age, and *all the people*, with more care for the sentiment than for the style of rendering it, give utterance in loud and united voice to the praises of God. This was one secret of the success of early Methodism. This is one of the greatest needs of modern Methodism. May the Sunday school do her part toward correcting the present unfortunate tendency toward "artistic performances" and orchestral monopolies in the house of God!

The SECRETARY is not an unimportant officer in the Sunday school. He is assistant to the "clerk" or "recording secretary" of the Church. Are not the names he registers by that very act placed on the roll of the Church? Not all, indeed, as full members, nor as probationers, nor as baptized "subjects;" but if in none of these relations, certainly as *candidates* for the Church

—"catechumens" if you please—and thus within her grasp and under her influence. The secretary should therefore record names cautiously, pass them over to the Pastor regularly, notice and report absences promptly, and seek by all the means in his power—not forgetting prayer and personal correspondence—to hold in the Church perpetually those whose names he is permitted to record on the Sunday school roll. He should see that scholars who must leave the school are provided with certificates of membership and standing. We venture the assertion that twenty good secretaries who hold the true theory of the Church school will save in one year at least a hundred persons to the Church in the places to which they remove, and this simply by providing the departing pupils with certificates, and by anticipating their arrival at the place of destination by a letter, or circular, or duplicate certificate, forwarded to the Pastor resident there. This good work may be still further facilitated by following the dismissed

members with frequent circulars relating to the school, and with personal letters of Christian friendship, counsel, and inquiry. The results of such correspondence should be recorded in a book kept for that purpose. In this way the secretary may all the while extend the influence of the particular Church with which he is identified, and by his pen perform a service of inestimable value.

The duties of the TREASURER are few, easily understood, and usually well performed. We hope that the day is not far distant when each Sunday school shall have an annual appropriation from the Church of which it is a part. This arrangement will render the treasurer's service still more simple and agreeable.

And now concerning the LIBRARIAN. We cannot speak of his duties without advancing a theory relative to the library itself. And this is our thinking on this annoying but important question: We believe that the Church should purchase, organize, distribute, and replenish the

library of the Church Sunday school. 1. Because the Church is largely responsible for the literature read by her members, and by those who are providentially under her direction. 2. Because the dignity attaching to the title and idea of a "Church library" will tend to improve the character of the books selected. They will be more likely to meet the tastes of adults and advanced young people than a so-called "Sunday school library." 3. Because by this arrangement the Sunday school will be relieved of the odium that it now incurs from the unfavorable reputation which Sunday school books bear among cultivated people. 4. Because a Church library will be kept open the more easily during the week to supply readers; thus avoiding interruption of the lessons and waste of time in Sunday school.

How shall a school desiring to secure these benefits proceed in carrying out the plan? 1. Let the Sunday school officers and teachers by a formal vote transfer the library now in the

school to the officers of the Church, requesting them to accept, and to establish a Church library. 2. Let the board (or whatever the Church organization may be called) appoint a committee of at least five judicious, cultivated Christian ladies and gentlemen, whose duty it shall be to read and approve new books, and every month to place a new installment on the shelves, that the interest in the library may be always fresh. 3. Let the library be opened before and after prayer-meeting on a week evening; also on Saturday afternoon and evening. To accommodate persons living in the country or at a distance from the Church, let the Church library be opened on Sabbath at such hours as will not interfere with the service of preaching or of Bible study. 4. Keep a list of all persons who agree to receive, read, and return the books. To all such issue free cards and catalogues.

In some places this plan may be wholly impracticable. It will grow more and more into favor, however, with the large schools, especially

as they learn to depend more upon Bible study and training than upon other and outside attractions.

In the school or independent of it, the library must have a manager and a system. We depend more upon the manager than upon the system. Given, a librarian with tact, industry, and enthusiasm, and he will make any scheme—even the poorest—a success, while without the right man to handle it, the best method in the world will prove a failure.

Last, but by no means least in the roll of Church school officers, are teachers and class-leaders, of whom as workers of the same order and as sub-Pastors we shall speak in our closing chapter.

Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set.

And the king went up into the house of the Lord, and all the men of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem with him, and the priests, and the prophets, and all the people, both small and great: and he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant which was found in the house of the Lord.

Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?
By taking heed thereto according to thy word.

I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you.

CHAPTER X.

THE OLDER SCHOLARS.

More noble, . . . in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily.—Acts xvii, 11.

WE do not despair of the old, although we labor sedulously, and with such confidence, in behalf of the young. Sometimes we are afraid that theories which place so high an estimate upon the opportunities of childhood may tend to discourage those who, looking back from middle age upon lost privileges, almost assure themselves that past neglect has forfeited future opportunity. The lamentation which closes with the fateful words, "Too late!" may prove disastrous to the doubting and despairing soul.

Why should we pronounce our own doom

while the sun shines upon us, and the good God prolongs our lives, and the glorious Gospel appeals with its "whosoevers" to the ears and hearts of men?

Why should the old neglect mental improvement because in early life they gave so little attention to it? The records of history speak hopefully to the old. We have somewhere met the following illustrations of the possibilities of age: "Socrates at an extreme age learned to play on musical instruments. Cato at eighty years of age thought proper to learn the Greek language. Plutarch when between seventy and eighty commenced the study of Latin. Boccaccio was thirty-five years of age when he commenced his studies in light literature, yet he became one of the three great masters of the Tuscan dialect, Dante and Petrarch being the other two. Sir H. Spelman neglected the sciences in his youth, but commenced the study of them when he was between fifty and sixty years of age. After this time he became a

most learned antiquarian and lawyer. Colbeth, the famous French minister, at sixty years of age returned to his Latin and law studies. Ludovico at the great age of one hundred and fifteen wrote the memories of his own times. Ogilby, the translator of Homer and Virgil, was unacquainted with Latin and Greek until he was past fifty years of age. Franklin did not commence his philosophical pursuits until he had reached his fiftieth year. Accorso, a great lawyer, being asked why he began his study of law so late, answered, that indeed he began it late; he could therefore master it sooner. Dryden in his sixty-eighth year commenced the translation of the Iliad, and his most pleasing productions were written in his old age."

Many an old man has learned the wisdom of Christ, and commenced a career of discipleship with the frosts of age whitening his brow. With regret for a wasted past of threescore years, he has consecrated the remaining

eternity of his existence to the God who made and redeemed him.

Let not the aged neglect the improvement of mind and heart and time and all gracious opportunity. Let the Sunday school be a school for all. Let the Bible be the text-book of the infant and of the octogenarian. Let hope cheer and inspire the trembling, self-distrustful, regretful man who, having long absented himself from Christ, seeks at last to be a true and studious disciple in the school of our great Master.

But there is an important class in the Church and community who do not count themselves old enough to be called adults, and yet who protest against being regarded as children. We call them "the young people." Now the Church must have a firmer hold upon this class. One or two hours a week of Sabbath school singing, teaching, and social cheer will not suffice.

Here is the great problem—How shall we secure the regular attendance of a larger propor-

tion of young people and adults at our schools, and how gain a firmer hold upon them when once connected with us? It is important, too, in securing this hold, to do it by means that will contribute to the great end of our Church-work—the development of Christian character through Bible study. Now, how can we induce our people generally to study the word of God? How surround this work with attractions sufficient to counteract the dissipating influences of the world? How make such study contribute to the social life and strength, as well as to the spirituality, of the Church? These questions have been asked over and over again by Pastors and influential laymen. We propose to give an answer.

1. The Pastor himself has more influence in this matter than any other man, we had almost said than any five men in his Church. His position gives him a sort of authority. His words weigh more than the words of other men. As we have already shown, in his pulpit an-

nouncements, prayers, and sermons, in prayer-meetings, in pastoral calls, in casual contacts with the members of his Church, he may do a vast deal for this work. Then what so mighty as his personal example?

2. A few influential Church-members and office-holders may form themselves into an efficient league whose words and example, operating in the several spheres of personal influence, would draw many adults toward the school of the Church.

3. A higher order of teaching in the school will work incalculably more than outside influence, and where the two can co-operate we may look for rapid and gratifying growth.

4. The relinquishment (in smaller places) of one of the sermons would afford time for a service of Bible study. In large cities, where pulpit competitions are rife and require two regular public services, the modification of one of these into a sort of popular Bible lecture-lesson would soon so charm the people with biblical study,

and furnish them opportunity to attend to it, that the Church could fulfill the Master's command to *teach*, as it now does to *preach*, the word. Such a "Bible service," with simultaneous answers from the vast congregation, with illustrative diagrams, maps, etc., to aid the teacher or lecturer, with songs of salvation sung by old and young in a magnificent chorus-choir composed of the whole assembly, would be no desecration of God's day, and would develop vastly more intellectual activity and love for the Holy Scriptures than it is possible for the present preaching service to secure.

5. But at present let us see what may be done during the week in the direction indicated. And to make our plan clear, let us formulate it in a Constitution. We suggest it tentatively, for although during our early pastorate we employed some of its features, others are, so far as we are concerned, entirely untested.

CONSTITUTION OF THE SENIOR CIRCLE.

1. It is the design of the *Senior Circle* connected with —— Church to encourage the habitual and thorough study of the Holy Scriptures, especially by the young people and adults of the Church and community; the cultivation of correct habits of reading and study, and the promotion of a true social life in connection with the Church; and to do this in such a manner as shall advance the divine kingdom in our midst, tend to the deepening of spiritual experience, and the increase of our moral and religious influence.

2. There shall be a principal, secretary, and treasurer, who, together with the Pastor of the Church and the superintendent of the Sunday school, shall constitute a board of managers, all of whom shall be elected annually. [Where the Pastor or superintendent is elected as principal another name shall be added, so that the board shall always consist of five officers.]

3. The Senior Circle shall hold a meeting every week. Once every quarter it shall be known as the *social session*. Three times every quarter the meetings shall be known as the *lecture session*. Nine times a quarter they shall be called *lesson sessions*. [The *social session* is designed to be a sort of *conversazione*, or literary gathering for social conversation, the examination of pictures and maps, the reading of essays, etc., etc.; this meeting to be free from formality and restraint, and calculated to mingle the freedom of a Church sociable with the higher ends of literary associations. Such literary meetings are now quite common among select circles in the Church. The Senior Circle will aim to popularize them. At the *lecture session* some scientific subject may be taken up, and illustrated by diagrams, experiments, etc. Popular lectures on chemistry, astronomy, photography, telegraphy, etc., etc., prepared by home talent and in the interest of Christianity, would soon awaken an interest in that Church and its

school, and secure the best talent of the community to do a grand work in the way of religious culture for all concerned. The *lesson sessions* should be devoted to the study of the semi-secular phases of the Bible, which can have little or no place in the regular Sunday school exercises, such as outlines of Bible history, the geography of the Bible, its manners and customs, natural history, civil and religious regulations, etc., etc., a department full of fascination, throwing light upon all parts of the holy Book, and yet but little known by the mass of even Christian people.*

4. The Senior Circle must never interfere with the Sunday school and its established meetings, nor under any circumstances hold Sunday sessions. [While the organizations are entirely distinct, the Circle is designed to encourage and foster the school by attracting to it the older portion of the community.]

* We shall speak more at length on this subject in the next chapter.

5. There shall be two grades or classes of members in the Senior Circle. First, the *pledged:* those who agree to attend regularly the sessions of the Sunday school and the Senior Circle, prepare all lessons required, and obey the regulations adopted. From this class the Board of Managers must be elected. Secondly, the *invited*, who may, by vote of the pledged members, be enrolled as members of the Circle. The invited members are entitled to all the advantages of the Circle except the right to vote and hold office. No person under fifteen years of age can be a pledged member.

Go and walk through the land, and describe it, and come again to me, that I may here cast lots for you before the Lord in Shiloh. And the men went and passed through the land, and described it by cities into seven parts in a book.

Come over into Macedonia, and help us.

O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called.

> Give all thou canst: high heaven rejects the lore
> Of nicely calculated less or more.—WORDSWORTH.

CHAPTER XI.

COLLATERAL AIDS.

"Give thyself wholly to them."—1 TIM. iv, 15.

THE Bible is an immense book. It is as wonderful for its richness and variety as for its magnitude. There is scarcely a branch of human knowledge upon which it does not shed some light. It is a book of diverse sciences, albeit its central science is that of salvation. To this all the rest bow as the sheaves of Hebron and the stars of heaven bowed to Joseph.

In the unfolding of the plan of redemption which the Bible records we find a treasure of history, of biography, of geography, of ancient, peculiar, and almost forgotten usages, of philosophy, of ethics, of theology—such as no other book in the world contains. Now if a man

would be head-master of the school in which this great volume is the text-book, he must indeed give himself wholly to these things. He has no time for any thing else. He must be literally *homo unius libri*.

The minister who becomes an enthusiastic pastor and teacher will find the pulpit a limited sphere and the Sabbath but a small portion of the time he needs for exposition, and for training his people in the contents of the Book. Prizing all the knowledge which God has there communicated, he seeks to awaken in his young people and among the old an intense delight in truth. He trains them in Bible history and biography, knowing how much is lost by not taking up its events in their due chronological order. He trains his people in Bible geography—for how can one adequately comprehend history without geography? Is not the Bible full of geography? And do not the lands of the Bible yet remain singularly unchanged in most of their features, as though God would preserve the land to com-

plement and thus corroborate and illustrate the Book? The old customs—domestic, political, religious—how they are inwrought into the very texture of the divine poetry, prophecy, and precept! One cannot clearly interpret the Word unless he knows these customs. And does not the far East still hold them? Are they not glowing on granite and marble walls in Egypt? Do not the clay books of Nineveh and Babylon perpetuate the knowledge of them? Our wholly consecrated Pastor brings land and book, custom and book, picture and book together. The one explains the other. The young people who cared little for the Bible at first have been led into the very heart of it by way of Egypt and Sinai and Syria and Nineveh. They looked eagerly at the "stones" he showed them, and lo! they found written on them the commandments of God.*

The Bible is a book of doctrines. The Church Catechism is a systematic arrangement

* See account of the Palestine Class, Appendix V.

of these doctrines. They are there formulated. They are to be buried in the mind of childhood as the conduits and water-pipes are laid under a city. For a time they seem almost useless; hidden and forgotten. But lo! one day the gates in the reservoir are hoisted, and through the buried pipes rushes a stream of cold, refreshing, delightful, life-giving water. So our Pastor believes in the "dry formulas" of faith; but he teaches them in so pleasant a manner that they never seem dry to *his* scholars, and betimes, and before a long time too, the streams of salvation flow through them.

The Church is also an *army*. The Pastor knows this well, and all the week keeps his people drilling and warring and working. He raises up from among his little people a band of willing laborers and brave soldiers. He scatters tracts by their hands. He collects by their aid missionary money. He distributes Bibles, he visits the poor, the sick, and the imprisoned through his busy people.

Knowing that service rendered is all the more zealously and efficiently performed if it be *intelligent* service, he trains his people in missionary work. They know the missionary maps and the various fields of missionary labor the peculiar difficulties to be there overcome, the measure of success achieved already, the work remaining to be done.

He moreover trains his people in all kinds of Christian work, and makes them acquainted as far as possible with the history of eleemosynary institutions and brotherhoods the world over. His Church is itself a "College for Bible students and for Christian workers."

Science is busy. He exalts science, but never above the God of science; and he strips infidelity of all its modern pretenses and sophisms, never for a moment admitting the possibility that revelation may yet succumb to "reason," or scientific culture displace the old-fashioned Gospel. He understands science, and tries to awaken in his membership, old and

young, an admiration for it; but in this he never loses sight, nor allows them to lose sight, of the cross of Christ.

The consecrated Pastor trains up teachers from the senior scholars. He believes in *normal classes.* He graduates a band of well-trained young people every year, appointing them to office in the presence of the whole congregation, and requiring of them certain sacred vows before he accepts their service.*

Such a Pastor finds perpetual delight in the word and the work of the Lord. And need we say that the Lord himself delighteth in such service and in such servants?

* See Appendix VI.

Except the Lord build the house,
They labor in vain that build it:
Except the Lord keep the city,
The watchman waketh but in vain.

This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying,
Not by might, nor by power,
But by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.

Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

CHAPTER XII.

THE GREAT NEEDS.

"Go . . . teach (disciple) all nations. . . ; teaching (instructing) them. . . ; and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."—MATT. xxviii, 20.

THE first and main want of the modern Sunday school is the MASTER'S presence. The spiritual mission of the institution has been forgotten, less by the talkers at conventions than by the great majority of teachers who never attend conventions. The theory of the few outreaches the practice of the many. We have reason to fear that there are many teachers who make no personal religious appeals to their pupils, who never pray with them, in whose classes young persons have remained for years without a knowledge of Christ, without any deep-wrought convictions, and even without

one zealous effort on the teacher's part for their conversion. Such classes and such schools seem to lack only one thing, but it is the one thing needful. Enthusiasm, numbers, attractiveness, and a score of other charms they may possess, but O! where is the Master?

We trace this lamentable lack to the indefinite if not incorrect theories which underlie the Sunday school. If what we build be a breakwater instead of a light-house, why be surprised that no rays fall upon the black night from its summit? If the Sunday school is a human, subordinate, temporary substitute, independent of the Church and without Divine authority, who can wonder that the Divine co-operation has not been sought or secured! If it is organized merely to *hold* childhood until the Church itself shall come with diviner powers, we need not measure its worth by any spiritual result, and may expect that in the zeal to perfect its organization, display its drill in music, martial movement, and biblical schol-

arship, it will too often forget to pass its pupils over to the Church, and not unfrequently alienate them from it. But the school is more than this theory allows, and it needs first and always the Divine co-operation. No degree of convenience and elegance in architectural arrangements, no completeness in appointments, no precision and harmony of movement in discipline, no thoroughness in intellectual training, no impressive proprieties in devotional service, no ingenious illustrations from the superintendent's desk or blackboard, no eloquence in occasional addresses—none of these things can compensate for the absence of the "power" which the Holy Ghost alone imparts. The Master's presence is indispensable, for ours is the *school of Christ.* We certainly need the Spirit in the school of the Word, because the Word is the "sword of the Spirit."

Next to the Master's presence the modern Sunday school craves *ecclesiastical recognition as a means of grace.* The Methodist Church

owes more than she can estimate to her system of class-meetings. By this she has maintained a permanent pastorate in connection with the itinerancy. The class leaders are the Pastor's assistants—sub-Pastors. We have often asked, Why may not the groupings or classes of the Sunday school be incorporated in the arrangements of the Church? Thus we should secure unity of plan, and at the same time increase the number of the Pastor's authorized helpers.

Are the objects and appropriate methods of the Church and school classes so diverse as to render this impracticable? The Church class seeks the advancement of each believer in the divine life; it encourages the free expression of his convictions, needs, and attainments; it rebukes, exhorts, admonishes, and instructs, building him up in Christian knowledge and purity. To the inquirer it is the Interpreter's house, where many great truths are for the first time explained to him. Now precisely what the

Church class scholar needs our Sunday school scholar needs—frank conversation about the way of life, admonition, exhortation, instruction, and encouragement—all tending to growth in grace. We claim that this is the true object of the Church school. It is a spiritual, not an intellectual gymnasium. It strikes at the heart. Alas! that we have so few such schools. Our most approved teachers have inquired more after *method* than after *power*. To recite well every Sabbath, and not so much to live near to Christ and to work for Christ every day, has been the great aim of many of our most celebrated schools.

We would fain impress Pastors, teachers, superintendents, and scholars with the fact that the Sunday school is designed to strengthen religious character and experience; and that what the faithful class leader would do for his class member, the faithful Sunday school teacher should do for his scholar. "But all Sunday scholars are not Church members." *Full mem-*

bers by faith and baptism, alas! no; perhaps not even *probationers* or *seekers*. We have not been sufficiently aiming at this. We have not informed our pupils upon their admission to the school that we could not do our best work for them until they had given themselves to Christ. And we fear that a large majority of the Sunday school scholars are unconverted. Though not "full members," "probationers," or "seekers," do these scholars sustain no relation to the Church? "Baptized members from infancy, perhaps." But for them we organize Church classes. Are all other scholars outside of the Church, in such a sense as to render the class arrangement inappropriate and unprofitable? We hold them by parental authority, and generally by their own consent, and we claim that as candidates for baptism—"catechumens" like those of old—they are in some sense connected with the Church. They walk at least in the outer courts, and we may more easily than we think (because Christ is with us) lead them up

through the gate Beautiful into the higher courts of the Lord's house. The catechumens need the pastoral and sub-pastoral care. By virtue of their relation to the Church through the families to which they belong, we are directed in the Discipline to visit and instruct them. Shall their voluntary relation to the school of the Church grant us no similar or superior advantages? We think that such interest in them, and such ecclesiastical relations guaranteed them, would exalt their view of the Church, and make them eager to enter her higher fellowships.

"But would you turn the exercises of a Sunday school class into those of a Church class?" We should unquestionably correct the one-sided methods of each by a blending of their respective characteristics. To the study of Scripture truth (the chief thing in the best Sunday school classes as now conducted) we should add the element of personal experience, (the main thing in the Church class.) The ever-present aim

of the Sunday school teacher should be the spiritual profit of his scholars. The frankest expression of their religious doubts and desires should be encouraged. Every lesson should be examined with a view to the edification of each pupil. And if the Church class leader, following the Sunday school teacher's example, were to introduce more of the divine Word into the exercises of his weekly meeting, we are confident that an element of interest and strength would be imparted to the service. Truth is the sword of the Spirit; truth is the wire through which the celestial currents sweep.

Father Reeves, the matchless class leader of Lambeth, knew the value of the Bible, and was never satisfied "until each member *could for himself prove from the Scripture* every doctrine he professed, and quote from Scripture the warrant for each promise, on the fulfillment of which he relied." He used occasionally to devote an entire session of his class to the study of a Scripture lesson, as a Bible class would. When

men of middle age, and old men who did not know how to read, were brought into his class he taught them. "And," said he, "we set apart a Sunday for them to read a portion of Holy Scripture to us, to hear how they improve, and to stimulate others to learn." *

Can we forget the "Holy Club" at Oxford, with their week-evening meetings for reading the Greek Testament and the ancient classics, and on Sunday evenings their studies in divinity? "They built me up daily," says George Whitefield, "in the knowledge and fear of God, and taught me to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ."

We say, then, let us make the Church class a

* The biographer of Father Reeves, after reporting his method of conducting class, says, "Rather novel this! some may be disposed to exclaim. Yes; but let them that say so think again, and they will acknowledge it undeniably good. This excellent leader would not have his members satisfied until they could prove from Scripture the soundness of their faith, and until, to the joy of their souls, they could read for themselves in their own tongue the wonderful works of God. May such leaders and members be multiplied!"

Bible school for spiritual growth, and its leader a teacher; and let the Sunday school class become a Bible school for spiritual growth, and its teacher a leader. This arrangement will not interfere with, but rather benefit, the love-feasts and general classes of the Church, increase the thoughtfulness and stability of Christians, render the preaching of God's word a greater delight, and enable us to retain in the Church the multitudes of young people who now every year drop out of our schools through the lack of Church sympathy, of adult attendance, intellectual food, and spiritual influence.

The next most urgent demand of the Sunday school is to be met by *earnest, trained Christian teachers*. We would not raise an impracticable standard here. First the teacher should have a general knowledge of the plan of salvation; then that experience of God's grace which makes the plan precious and real. These will be accompanied by a love for the "word of his grace." Then he needs the *will* to wrest time

enough from the world's grasp every week for a careful preparation of the lesson ; *love* enough for the scholars and that truth to make the teacher simple, conversational, and straightforward in his manner; *tact* to draw out the scholars' own thought, and concentrate their attention upon the one central truth of the lesson. These will give the teacher, under the divine blessing, abundant success.

After this, the more biblical and scientific knowledge the teacher has the better. Mere intellectual brilliancy and force, without heart or Christ—away with them! and away with all lifeless systems of teaching! We love system, and believe in thorough analysis in order to exhaustive exegesis, but let this be attended to in the study at home. In the class, let our method be that of free and wisely-directed conversation, arresting the attention of all, eliciting the opinions and experiences of each, and leading to profitable self-application.

The personal character of the teacher is of

paramount importance. Piety is as indispensable here as in the class leader and pastor. The teacher's character is a perpetual presence with the scholar, so that it is itself a constant teacher. Through his influence the sown seed of the Sabbath is growing seven days in productive soil, though the teacher "knoweth not how." Frivolity, love of dress and pleasure, carelessness, indifference, unkindness, superficiality and vagueness in teaching—these, too, are seed, and they drop in the soil and grow, and what wonder if they choke the seed of the kingdom in the pupil's soul?

Blessed is he whose whole soul is given up to this work of teaching the word of God! He is blessed *here*, for the study of the truth makes him even now free on the earth. Then, moreover, the fruit is often gathered this side the New Jerusalem. There are teachers now living to whom their scholars have said: "Thanks, ten thousand thanks, for your faithful service. Lo! it has brought us to Christ!" Now this is heaven itself.

Such a teacher will be blessed hereafter—eternally blessed! Do you not hear the words already falling from His lips who shall sit upon the "throne of His glory?" Hark!

Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. . . . Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Matt. xxv, 34, 40.

APPENDIX.

I.

WE are confident that the following additional testimonies, (from Dr. Bingham,) concerning the devotion of the early Church to the Word of God, will be acceptable to our readers:

It is noted by Sozomen and Palladius of Marcus the Hermit, that he was so expert in the Scriptures when he was but a youth that he could repeat all the Old and New Testament without a book; and it is observable, that as there were many catechetic schools in those times for explaining the Scriptures to the catechumens, so *there were also schools appointed in many Churches to instruct the youth in the knowledge of the Scriptures.* When Gregory, the apostle of the Armenians, first converted that nation, it is said in his Life that he set up schools in every city, and masters over them, by the king's command, to teach the Armenian children to read the Bible: and Theodoret relates a remarkable story of Protogenes the scribe, that when Valens, the Arian emperor, banished him to Antinoe, in Thebais, in the utmost parts of Egypt, he, finding the greatest part of

the city to be heathens, *set up a charity school among them, and taught them the Holy Scriptures, dictating to them in writing short-hand David's Psalms, and making them learn such doctrines of the apostolical writings as were proper for them to understand, by which means he brought many, both of the children and parents, over to the Christian faith.* And it has been observed before, that, by the canons of some councils, such sort of charity schools were appointed to be set up in cathedrals and other churches, where, no doubt, according to the custom of those days, children were taught to read the Scriptures. These rules were renewed in several councils under Charles the Great and the following princes. Particularly in the Second Council of Chalons, anno 813, it was appointed, that according to the order of Charles the Emperor, bishops should set up schools to teach both grammar and the knowledge of the Scriptures; and in the Council of Toul, or Savonieres, in Lorraine, the decree was renewed, that schools of the Holy Scripture and human learning should be erected; forasmuch as, by the care of the religious emperors in former days, by this means both ecclesiastical knowledge and human learning had made a considerable progress in the world; and Mr. Wharton will furnish the inquisitive reader with many other rules and canons, made about the same time, to promote and encourage the learning of the Scriptures.

Eusebius says of the Holy Scriptures: "They were translated into all languages, both of Greeks and barbarians,

throughout the world, and studied by all nations as the oracles of God." Chrysostom assures us that "the Syrians, the Egyptians, the Indians, the Persians, the Ethiopians, and a multitude of other nations, translated them into their own tongues, whereby *barbarians learned to be philosophers, and women and children with the greatest ease imbibed the doctrine of the Gospel.*" Theodoret says the same, that "every nation under heaven had the Scripture in their own tongue. The Hebrew books were not only translated into Greek, but into the Roman, Egyptian, Persian, Indian, Armenian, Scythian, and Sauromatic languages, and, in a word, into all tongues used by all nations in his time." The like is attested by St. Jerome, St. Austin, and many others.

"Constantine himself," as is observed by Eusebius, "was wont to employ himself in the Church, partly by joining in the public prayers with the people, and partly by taking the books of the divine oracles into his hands and exercising his mind in the contemplation of them;" and probably for this reason he ordered Eusebius to prepare fifty copies of the Bible for the use of the Church of Constantinople, as his letter to Eusebius witnesses; for it is observed, and spoken to his praise by Eusebius in another place, that by his means "innumerable multitudes, both of men and women, exchanged the food of their bodies for that of their souls, that rational food which was so agreeable to rational minds, and which they obtained by reading the Holy Scriptures."

The testimony of Chrysostom: "For this reason," says he to the people to whom he preached, "we *often acquaint you many days beforehand with the subject of our discourse, that, taking the Bible into your hands in the mean time, and running over the whole passage, you may have your minds better prepared to hear what is to be spoken.* And this is the thing I have always advised, and shall still continue to exhort you to, that you should not only hear what is said in this place, but spend your time at home continually in reading the Holy Scriptures. And here let no one use those frigid and vain excuses: I am a man engaged in the business of the law; I am taken up with civil affairs; I am a tradesman; I have a wife, and children to breed up; I have the care of a family; I am a secular man, it belongs not to me to read the Scriptures, but to those that have bid adieu to the world and are retired into the mountains, and have nothing else to do but to exercise themselves in such a way of living. What sayest thou, O man? Is it not thy business to read the Scriptures, because thou art distracted with a multitude of other cares? Yes, certainly, it belongs to thee more than them; for they have not so much need of the help of the Holy Scriptures as you have who are tossed in the waves of the multiplicity of business." Then, enumerating what sins and temptations secular men are exposed to, he infers that they have perpetual need of divine remedies, as well to cure the wounds they have already received, as to ward off those they are in danger of receiving; to quench the darts of

the devil while they are at a distance, and drive them away, by continual reading of the Holy Scriptures; for it is impossible that a man should attain salvation without perpetual exercise in reading spiritual things.

"Take the book into thy hands, read the whole history, and remember those things that are intelligible and easy; and those things that are more obscure and dark read over and over again; and if thou canst not by frequent reading dive into the meaning of what is said, go to a wiser person, betake thyself to a teacher, and confer with him about any such passage; show thy diligence, and desire to be informed. . . .

"The reading of the Scriptures is our great guard against sin. Our ignorance of them is a dangerous precipice and a deep gulf; it is an absolute betraying of our salvation to know nothing of the Divine law. It is this that has brought forth so many heresies; this, that has brought so much corruption into our lives; this, that has turned all things into confusion." —CHRYSOSTOM.

For it is very observable, further, that in the primitive Church not only men and women, but children, were encouraged and trained up from their infancy to the reading of the Holy Scriptures; and the catechumens were not only admitted to some of the prayers of the Church peculiarly appropriated to their condition, but also obliged to learn the Scriptures, as part of their discipline and instruction. . . .

All, then, that is further here to be showed is, that children

were trained up to the use of the Holy Scriptures. And of this we have undoubted evidence from many eminent instances of their practice.

II.

CATECHETICS.

For an elaborate, learned, and exhaustive discussion of the whole question of catechistic theory and practice we refer our readers to M'Clintock & Strong's "Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature," from which we quote a few extracts from the proof-sheets forwarded to the author by Dr. M'Clintock himself a short time before his death:

The science of Catechetics, as such, can hardly be said to have taken its rise until after the Reformation. But as the necessities of the case gave rise to oral instruction in Christianity from the very beginning, and to the subsequent development of this instruction into a systematic branch of Church activity, we find indications of Catechetics at all periods.

1. *Before the Reformation.*—The first teaching of Christ and his apostles was necessarily oral, and partly homiletical, partly catechetical. But we find no mention in the New Testament of catechists as Church functionaries. In the second century

we find mention of catechists and catechumens, (for example, in the "Clementines.") Under the catechetical system of the fourth century the catechumens were taught the ten commandments, a creed, or summary confession of faith, and the Lord's prayer, with suitable expositions; but, prior to baptism, the nature of the sacraments was carefully concealed. (See "Arcani Disciplina:" Catechumen.) The "Apostolical Constitutions" not only mention the catechumens, but fix three years as the period of instruction, (viii, 32.) In Gregory of Nyssa's († 394) λόγος κατηχητικὸς ὁ μέγας (ed. Krabinger, Monac. 1835,) and in Cyril of Jerusalem's († 386) Κατηχήσεις (Catechetical discourses) we find catechetical instruction for both proselytes and newly-baptized persons. Augustine wrote a tract, "De Catechizandis rudibus," (opp. t. vi.) After the Church had become established, and its increase was obtained by the birth and baptism of children rather than by conversions from heathendom, the idea of catechetical instruction passed from being that of a preparation for baptism to being that of a culture of baptized children. When confirmation became general, catechetical instruction began to bear the same relation to it that it had formerly done to baptism. In the missions to heathens, in the Middle Ages, it became usual to baptize converts at once, and the ancient catechumenate fell into disuse. Nor was great attention given to the catechizing of baptized children in the Roman Church up to the time of the Reformation; the confessional took the place of the

Catechism. . . . The names of Bruno, Bishop of Würzburg, (eleventh century,) Hugo de Sta. Victore, Otto of Bamberg, and John Gerson, are to be mentioned as active in restoring catechetical instruction. The Waldenses, Wicliffites, and other reforming sects, gave attention to the subject. . . .

2. *Since the Reformation.*—As the Reformation was a revival of religion for the human intellect as well as for the heart, it naturally followed that the training of children soon came to demand new methods, or the restoration of old methods, of grounding them in the faith. Luther was the father of modern catechetics, both by the Catechisms which he himself prepared, and by the writings in which he explained Catechetics and gave an impulse to their pursuit. The principal points of Luther's Catechisms are the Decalogue, the Creed, the Lord's prayer, and the Sacraments, (1529.) Luther, with true insight, however, taught that catechization should not merely include the hearing of a recitation from the book, but also an explanation and an application of it to the hearts of the pupils. (See prefaces to his larger and smaller Catechisms, and also Brüstlein, "Luther's Einfluss auf das Volksschulwesen," etc., Jena, 1852.) Calvin also published Catechisms, (1536, 1541,) and in the preface to the "Catechismus Eccles. Genevensis" he gave his views of the nature and design of Catechisms and of catechetical instruction at length. . . . The Reformed Churches generally followed: for example, the Heidelberg Catechism (1563) for the German Reformed; the Church of

England Catechism, (1553, 1572,) etc. The Helvetic Confession (*brevis et simplex*) makes catechization a duty of positive obligation in the Church. . . . In Germany, after the fervor of the Reformation period had passed, and the scholastic theologians reigned, the catechetical instruction degenerated into a mere formal routine of preparation for confirmation, and the same thing happened in the Church of England. Indeed, this result appears to be inevitable where baptismal regeneration is believed, and confirmation is made to follow as a matter of course. Spener and the Pietists gave new life to catechetical instruction by connecting it with spiritual teaching and life. (See Hurst, "History of Rationalism," p. 90; Thilo, "Spener als Katechet," Berlin, 1840.) The Church of Rome was compelled to follow the Reformers in catechetical instruction; the "Catechismus Romanus" (1566) became the basis of numerous Catechisms—those of Canisius, Bellarmin, Bossuet, and Fleury, attaining the widest circulation. As any bishop can authorize a Catechism for his diocese, the Romanists have now a great variety, and they are still increasing. (See "Theologische Quartalschrift," 1863, p. 443.)

The theory of catechization in the Protestant Church grew up gradually from the germs in Luther's teaching, through the period of decay and dry scholasticism, and finally shot up into full bloom in Pietism. Its principles are, 1. That the Catechism of the Church, stamped with its authority, shall be used in instruction; 2. That the instruction is not Socratic, that is, does

not aim to draw out what is in the mind of the pupil, but rather to convey revealed truth to the mind in a way which it can appreciate and understand; 3. That while the pupil is to learn the words of the Catechism by heart, the teacher is to explain and illustrate them from the Bible, and to enforce on the heart and conscience of the catechumen—that is, catechization is to be not merely didactic, but practical. It is further well settled that the Catechism of each particular Church should be taught to the children of that Church (1) by parents or guardians in the family; (2) by the Sunday school teacher, who should always be a constant catechist; and (3) by the pastor, whose catechization should not only be a test of the proficiency of the children under home and Sunday school instruction, but should include exhortation, illustration, and application also. It was one of Spener's glories that he introduced public catechization; and the Pastor who fails, at fixed times, to catechize the children in presence of the congregation, loses one of the most important means of Christian culture within the sphere of Church life.

Dr. Ashbel Green, ("Lectures on the Shorter Catechism," vol. i,) in his Introductory Lecture, thus speaks of the advantages of catechization: "The catechetical or questionary form of religious summaries renders them most easy and interesting to children and youth, and, indeed, to Christians of all ages and descriptions. For myself, I have no reluctance to state here publicly what I have frequently mentioned in private, that in

the composition of sermons one of the readiest and best aids I have ever found has been my Catechism. Let me add, further, that long observation has satisfied me that a principal reason why instruction and exhortation from the pulpit are so little efficacious is, that they presuppose a degree of information, or acquaintance with the truths and doctrines of divine revelation, which, by a great part of the hearers, is not possessed, and which would best of all have been supplied by catechetical instruction. It is exactly this kind of instruction which is at the present time most urgently needed in many, perhaps in most of our congregations. It is needed to imbue effectually the minds of our people with 'the first principles of the oracles of God,' to indoctrinate them soundly and systematically in revealed truth, and thus to guard them against being 'carried about with every wind of doctrine,' as well as to qualify them to join in the weekly service of the sanctuary with full understanding, and with minds in all respects prepared for the right and deep impression of what they hear."

The duty of catechization is enjoined in the laws of almost all branches of the Church. In the Church of England, by Canon 59, "every parson, vicar, or curate, upon every Sunday and holyday, before evening prayer, shall, for half an hour or more, examine and instruct the youth and ignorant persons of his parish in the Ten Commandments, the articles of the belief, and in the Lord's Prayer; and shall diligently hear, instruct, and teach them the Catechism set forth in the Book of Common

Prayer. And all fathers, mothers, masters, and mistresses shall cause their children, servants, and apprentices, who have not learned the Catechism, to come to the church at the time appointed, obediently to hear, and to be ordered by the minister until they have learned the same. And if any minister neglect his duty herein, let him be sharply reproved upon the first complaint, and true notice thereof given to the bishop or ordinary of the place. If, after submitting himself, he shall willingly offend therein again, let him be suspended. If so the third time, there being little hope that he will be therein reformed, then excommunicated, and so remain until he be reformed. And likewise, if any of the said fathers, mothers, masters, or mistresses, children, servants, or apprentices, shall neglect their duties as the one sort in not causing them to come, and the other in refusing to learn, as aforesaid, let them be suspended by their ordinaries, (if they be not children,) and if they so persist by the space of a month, then let them be excommunicated. And by the rubric, the curate of every parish shall diligently, upon Sundays and holydays, after the second lesson at evening prayer, openly in the church, instruct and examine so many children of the parish sent unto him as he shall think convenient, in some part of the Catechism. And all fathers and mothers, masters and dames, shall cause their children, servants, and apprentices (who have not learned their Catechism) to come to the church at the time appointed, and obediently to hear, and be ordered by the curate, until such

time as they have learned all that therein is appointed for them to learn." These stringent rules, however, have nearly become a dead letter. In the Protestant Episcopal Church, the xxviiith Canon (of 1832) enjoins that "the ministers of this Church who have charge of parishes or cures shall not only be diligent in instructing the children in the Catechism, but shall also, by stated catechetical lectures and instruction, be diligent in informing the youth and others in the doctrines, constitution, and liturgy of the Church." The Methodist Episcopal Church makes it the "duty of preachers to see that the Catechism is used in Sunday schools and families, to preach to the children, and to publicly catechise them in the Sunday schools and at public meetings appointed for that purpose." (Discipline, part v, § 2.) "It shall also be the duty of each preacher, in his report to each quarterly conference, to state to what extent he has publicly or privately catechised the children of his charge." (Part ii, chap. ii, § 17.) "At the age of ten years, or earlier, the preacher in charge shall organize the baptized children of the Church into classes, and appoint suitable leaders, male or female, whose duty it shall be to meet them in class once a week, and instruct them in the nature, design, and obligation of baptism, and truths of religion necessary to make them wise unto salvation." (Part i, chap. ii, § 2.) The Presbyterian Church makes catechising "one of the ordinances in a particular Church," ("Form of Government," chap. vii,) and enjoins the duty in its "Directory for Worship," chap. i, § 6; also chap. ix, § 1: "Children born

within the pale of the visible Church, and dedicated to God in baptism, are under the inspection and government of the Church, and are to be taught the Catechism, the Apostles' Creed, and the Lord's prayer." In the Reformed Church each Pastor is bound to expound the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Classis is bound to see that "the catechising of children and youth are faithfully attended to." (Constitution, chap. i, art. iii, § 8.) The Lutheran and German Reformed Churches, not only by their traditions, but also by Church law, are bound to fidelity in catechisation.

III.

REV. JOSEPH ALLEINE AND THE CATECHISM.

[From his Biography.]

During the time of his public ministry, on every Lord's day in the afternoon, he constantly catechised, before a great congregation, the youth of each sex by turns, among whom were several both young men and women, sometimes five or six of the chief scholars of the free school, sometimes five or six of the apprentices of the town, some of whom, though of man's estate, accounted it not a disgrace to learn, (according to the guise of this mad world,) but to be ignorant. Sometimes of the other sex, five or six young gentlewomen, who were under his wife's tuition, (and so his domestic oversight,) kept their turns, of whom she had not a few, and those the daughters of

gentlemen of good rank far and near, whose laudable emulation, and love to their father (as they styled him) and to the work, was the cause why they were not so overbashful as to decline so advantageous a course; by which, together with domestic instructions and example, even all received a tincture of piety and religion, and many a thorough impression; besides these, several virgins also, and among these the daughters of some of the chief magistrates in the town, kept their turns. In this his course he drew out, on the short answers in the Assembly's Catechism, an excellent discourse on all the points of the Christian theology, which he handled successfully, reducing his discourse to several heads, which he also proved by pertinent places of Scripture; which done, he gave both the heads and proofs, written at length, on a week-day, to those whom he designed to catechise on the ensuing Lord's day, which, besides the short answers in the Catechism and the annexed proofs, they committed to memory, and rendered on the afternoon of the day aforesaid. Throughout all which course he approved himself to be a most substantial divine.

Neither did his catechistical labors rest here, but also on Thursdays in the afternoon, as I remember, he catechised in the church, street by street, whole families, excepting the married or more aged, in order; which exercise, I suppose, he designed as preparatory to his Lord's-day work. Besides this, on Saturdays, in the morning, he catechised the free school of

that place, instructing them in the points of Christian doctrine, and excellently explaining the answers in the Assembly's Catechism, discovering a mine of knowledge in them and in himself.

IV.

EDUCATION AMONG THE JEWS.

The following is from Rabbi Raphael, in Barnard's "American Journal of Education:"

It may be assumed that education was looked upon as a religious duty, and therefore intrusted to the Priests and Levites. It is certain that in process of time these teachers neglected their duty to such a degree that Samuel found it necessary to introduce a new and enlarged system. He therefore founded the schools of the prophets, open to all Israelites. Respecting the internal polity and the system of education in these schools we know but little. We must, however, not suppose that the Hebrew word *Nabi*, "prophet," bore the same signification in the days of Samuel that it obtained at a later period of scriptural history, namely, that of an "inspired prediction of future events"—such an inspired prediction in the days of Samuel was called Ro-eh, or Hhoseh, "a seer," (1 Sam. ix, 9,) whereas the word Nabi, "prophet," is used in Genesis xx, 7, and in Isaiah ix, 15, to designate a "teacher;" in Exodus viii, 1, an "orator;" in Exodus xv, 20, and Judges iv, 4, a "poet," and in 1 Chronicles xxv,

passim, a "composer of music." This fourfold meaning of the word Nabi tells us what functions the "prophets" trained in these schools were intended to discharge. They were to be "teachers," "public orators," "poets," and "composers of sacred music," and the system of education was arranged accordingly. Ezra, though himself a priest, and "the men of the Great Assembly" over which he presided, again resorted to the plan of Samuel. Public schools of different degrees were every-where established; the priests no longer remained *ex officio* sole instructors of the people, but were superseded by a new class of teachers, the "Sopherim," *grammateis* "scribes." Thenceforth the history of education among the Jews stands clearly before us. Each town in Judea containing a certain number of inhabitants was bound to maintain a primary school, the Hhasan, "precentor," of the synagogue, in most instances, being the teacher. Seminaries of a higher grade were presided over by Sopherim, "scribes," and a sufficient annual income was assigned for their support.

V.

THE PALESTINE CLASS.

Sacred history, geography, and antiquities must be systematically and thoroughly taught to our Sunday school children. And yet the sacred hours of the Sabbath usually devoted to

Sabbath school cannot be appropriated to these topics when truths so much more important—the doctrinal and practical—are to be especially considered. Now by what method may we impart such knowledge in an attractive way to these our Sunday school students? Why may we not have a Sunday School Department devoted especially to these subjects?

I.—A PLAN.

1. Call such department the "Palestine Class," or "Class of Biblical Antiquities."

2. Its meetings may be held on some week-day evening, or or Saturday afternoon.

3. All persons should be invited to attend—adults and children—parents, teachers, pupils.

4. The Pastor, or other competent person, may be its President or its Teacher. A Chorister may be employed to conduct the musical exercises of the Class. The Secretary and Treasurer may be elected by ballot, quarterly.

5. The Church "Catechism," which most Pastors use in the Catechumen Class or Sunday school, may be introduced as a feature of this class.

6. The Class to be divided into grades, through which scholars may pass successively as they progress. This insures thoroughness, and renders the Class exercise interesting.

7. Select Committees of Examination and other officers from the highest grade at any time attained by the Class.

II.—APPARATUS.

1. The text-book employed by the Palestine Classes now organized is "Little Footprints in Bible Lands; or, Simple Lessons in Sacred History or Geography," published by Methodist Book Concern, 805 Broadway, New York. Price, 50 cents per copy. This little work contains historical and geographical recitations, geographical songs, maps, map charts, and a biblical gazetteer.

2. For reference the following are the best: Prof. Whiting's "Hand-Book of Sacred Geography," Hibbard's "Palestine," and Thomson's "Land and Book."

3. The cheapest Maps are those published by the Methodist Episcopal Sunday School Union, and for sale at the house above-mentioned. Our new Bible Maps: No. 1, "Scripture World," $5; No. 2, "Holy Land," $5.

4. The text-book above referred to is divided into five series of lessons, corresponding to the five grades of the Class. For convenience and pleasure, the recitations are usually conducted by the concert method, but to insure personal thoroughness, each pupil is examined separately and placed according to his advancement successively in his grade—"PILGRIM," "RESIDENT," "EXPLORER," "DWELLER IN JERUSALEM," and "TEMPLAR." By this simple, practicable, and pleasant plan, the liveliest interest may be maintained in the Class. For full explanations see "Little Footprints," pages 89, 90.

5. Certificates may be given to the members of each grade.

6. Expenses for Maps, Books, Certificates, etc., may be met by occasional Exhibitions, at which "Conversations" on a trip to the Holy Land, Biblical incidents, Songs, etc., etc., will insure novelty, profit, and entertainment.

7. Let the teacher keep a "Record," in which to enroll names of scholars in each grade; prepare his programme for each recitation in advance, and register the results of his private biblical researches. Such a record will become a most valuable "Cyclopedia."

8. Use a small tea "Call-Bell," by which order and perfection of drill may be maintained.

9. Scholars should always bring Bibles with them for reading and reference.

10. A Melodeon will be of great value in the singing and map exercises.

III. EXERCISES.

1. Let each session be short, and introduce as much variety in the exercises as possible.

2. Take short lessons from the text-book, and secure prompt, spirited concert responses.

3. Always read in concert some scriptural selection at the opening of the Class.

4. Give all scholars an opportunity to present difficult questions from the Bible, and let the same be answered by the Class the week after their announcement.

5. Give descriptions of sacred localities, distances from Jerusalem, size, present condition, sacred associations, etc. Let scholars often repeat these facts, and record in blank books for their own use. In this way they will soon become as familiar with the Holy Lands as with their own neighborhoods.

6. Give a specified time (two months or longer) to each grade. *Members of lower grades may be examined at any time for the higher already reached by the Class, but only at appointed times may the higher advance.* For example: If the highest grade is "Explorer," any lower grade may be examined at any time to attain the "Explorer's," but not go beyond that until the appointed time for the advance arrives. In this way new scholars can enter the Class and overtake the advanced; while the advanced, by frequent repetition of old lessons, become more thorough.

7. Let the teacher or President himself examine all candidates for the first or "Pilgrim" grade; after that let him appoint "Examiners" for the Historical lessons, he himself conducting all map exercises in every grade.

VI.

SOLEMN COVENANTS.

The Pastor will find it very profitable to develop in every possible way the religious zeal of his teachers.

The PUBLIC RECEPTION of Sunday school teachers should never be omitted.

The Church should extend its hand of welcome to the man who consecrates his gifts to the work of teaching in the Sabbath school. A word of counsel and encouragement at that important stage may have a most salutary effect upon his future career. The public recognition would favorably impress the Church itself, and give the teacher increased power over his scholars. This course has been adopted in several schools already, and we have prepared a tract for this purpose, entitled "The Public Reception of Teachers." The following is the form of the

COVENANT.

"I do solemnly promise to devote myself, with all diligence, to Sunday school labor. I will endeavor to study the word of God thoroughly and prayerfully; to spend as much time as possible in reading, meditation, and prayer, with special reference to my work; as regularly as possible to attend all the means of grace; to visit my scholars as their temporal or spiritual necessities may require, and to be punctually present at school and all meetings of teachers."

Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: Sept. 2005

PreservationTechnologies
A WORLD LEADER IN PAPER PRESERVATION
111 Thomson Park Drive
Cranberry Township, PA 16066
(724) 779-2111

BV
15-24
V

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
0 014 745 303 6